United Nations CEDAW/C/1999/I/1

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
17 November 1998

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Twentieth session
19 January–5 February 1999

Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the session.
2. Solemn declaration by the new members of the Committee.
3. Election of officers.
4. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
5. Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the nineteenth and twentieth sessions of the Committee.
6. Consideration of the reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
7. Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
8. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee.
9. Provisional agenda for the twenty-first session.
10. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twentieth session.

Annotations

Item 1. Opening of the session

The twentieth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will be opened by the representative of the Secretary-General.

Item 2. Solemn declaration by the new members of the Committee

According to rule 10 of the rules of procedure of the Committee, new members of the Committee shall make the solemn declaration contained in that rule.

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Item 3. Election of officers

The Committee shall elect a Chairperson, three Vice-Chairpersons and a Rapporteur for a term of two years, according to rules 13 and 14 of its rules of procedure and article 19 of the Convention. The term of the officers elected by the Committee at its twentieth session, on 19 January 1999, will expire on 31 December 2000. Under rule 43, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure, if there is an agreed slate, the candidates may be elected by acclamation, without the holding of a secret ballot.

Item 4. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Rule 7 of the rules of procedure provides that the agenda shall be adopted by the Committee at the beginning of its meetings. Rule 5 provides that the provisional agenda for each session shall be prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson, in conformity with the relevant provisions of articles 17 to 22 of the Convention, giving priority to items the inclusion of which was decided at a previous session of the Committee.

At its nineteenth session, the Committee approved the provisional agenda for its twentieth session.

The Committee has, since its sixth session, set up two standing working groups, namely, Working Group I, to consider and suggest ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee, and Working Group II, to consider ways and means of implementing article 21 of the Convention. At its seventh session, the Committee decided to keep the membership of the working groups flexible. At its eleventh session, the Committee decided that the working groups should be open only to members of the Committee, in accordance with the past practice. Specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations that could make substantive contributions to questions under consideration could be invited by the working groups to contribute to their deliberations. The working groups will meet during the session.

The proposed organization of work for the session is shown in the annex to the present document.

Documentation

Provisional agenda and annotations (CEDAW/C/1999/I/1)

Item 5. Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the nineteenth and twentieth sessions of the Committee

The Committee, at its twelfth session, decided to include an item that would permit the Chairperson to brief the Committee on activities and events occurring since the previous session that had a bearing on the Committee's work.

Item 6. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Article 18 of the Convention provides that States parties to the Convention shall undertake to submit to the Secretary-General for consideration by the Committee a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Convention, and other progress made in that respect. Reports are to be submitted within one year after the entry into force of the Convention for the State concerned and thereafter at least every four years and whenever the Committee so requests.

At its nineteenth session, the Committee, taking into account the criteria of preference to be given to those States parties whose reports had been pending for the longest time, the

need to give priority to initial reports and the desirability of a balance of reports in terms of geographic and other factors, decided to invite 10 States parties drawn from a provisional list to submit reports. Four of these States parties (Austria, Chile, Jordan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) were unable to present their reports at the twentieth session. In consultation with the Chairperson, the Secretariat therefore invited the State party Kyrgyzstan to present its initial report, bringing the total number of reporting States to seven.

At its twentieth session, the Committee will have before it the following reports: the initial reports of Algeria (CEDAW/C/DZA/1), Kyrgyzstan (CEDAW/C/KGZ/1) and Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/1); the combined second and third periodic reports of Greece (CEDAW/C/GRC/2–3) and the combined second and third periodic reports of Thailand (CEDAW/C/THA/2–3); the combined third and fourth periodic reports of China (CEDAW/C/CHN/3–4 and Add.1 and 2) and the fourth periodic report of Colombia (CEDAW/C/COL/4 and Add.1).

Rule 49 of the rules of procedure provides that representatives of a State party shall be present at meetings of the Committee when the report of that State is being examined and shall participate in discussions and answer questions concerning the report. The Secretary-General has informed the States parties concerned of the tentative dates on which their reports are scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its twentieth session.

Rule 47 of the rules of procedure provides that at each session the Secretary-General shall notify the Committee of the non-receipt of any report required from a State party under article 18 of the Convention. The Secretary-General also provides the Committee with a list of reports submitted by States parties to the Convention that have not yet been considered by the Committee. The Committee at its twentieth session will have before it the report of the Secretary-General on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (CEDAW/C/1999/I/2).

The Committee decided at its ninth session that a pre-session working group should be convened before each session to prepare questions relating to second and subsequent periodic reports for transmission to the representatives of States parties before the meetings at which their reports were to be considered. The pre-session working group for the twentieth session is scheduled to meet in New York from 11 to 15 January 1999.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (CEDAW/C/1999/I/2)

Initial report of Algeria (CEDAW/C/DZA/1)

Initial report of Kyrgyzstan (CEDAW/C/KGZ/1)

Initial report of Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/1)

Combined second and third periodic reports of Greece (CEDAW/C/GRC/2–3)

Combined second and third periodic reports of Thailand (CEDAW/C/THA/2–3)

Combined third and fourth periodic reports of China (CEDAW/C/CHN/3–4 and Add.1 and 2)

Fourth periodic report of Colombia (CEDAW/C/COL/4 and Add.1)

Item 7. Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Article 21 of the Convention provides that the Committee may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of the reports and information received from States parties. It also provides that such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the report of the Committee together with comments, if any, from States parties. Rule 48 of the rules of procedure provides that those suggestions and general recommendations shall be communicated by the Committee, through the Secretary-General, to the States parties for their comments.

At its tenth session, the Committee decided to provide, under the agenda item entitled "Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women", opportunities for specialists from the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies to present to the Committee in plenary information related to specific articles of the Convention or to issues being considered for general recommendations and suggestions.

At the same session, the Committee decided to select and to review specific articles and other issues to be considered at subsequent sessions as a long-term programme, without prejudice to any changes that might be necessary as a result of new developments and priorities arising from the review of the reports of States parties.

At its nineteenth session, the Committee agreed that the Secretariat should make the text of the draft general recommendation on article 12 of the Convention available along with proposals for amendment. Members were invited to submit comments to the Secretariat no later than 1 October 1998 to enable further discussion and adoption of a full text at the twentieth session of the Committee, in January 1999 (CEDAW/C/1999/I/WG.II/WP.1)

Article 22 of the Convention provides that the specialized agencies shall be entitled to be represented during the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the Convention as fall within the scope of their activities and that the Committee may invite the specialized agencies to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in those areas. The Committee at its twentieth session will have before it a note by the Secretary-General on the reports of specialized agencies (CEDAW/C/1999/I/3 and addenda).

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General on reports of specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities (CEDAW/C/1999/I/3)

Report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (CEDAW/C/1999/I/3/Add.1)

Report of the World Health Organization (CEDAW/C/1999/I/3/Add.2)

Report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (CEDAW/C/1999/1/3/Add.3)

Item 8. Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

At its twelfth session, the Committee decided that the Secretariat should prepare every year, as a pre-session document, a report on ways and means of improving the work of the Committee containing information provided by the Secretariat, comments made by members of the Committee or developments elsewhere in the human rights treaty regime. The Secretariat provides the Committee with a report on ways and means at each of its sessions (CEDAW/C/1999/I/4).

Under agenda item 8, the Committee will finalize its report to the Committee on the Status of Women, providing information on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action based on its review of the reports of States parties (CEDAW/C/1999/I/5).

The Committee will also have before it the draft rules of procedure prepared by a member of the Committee and discussed at its sixteenth session (CEDAW/C/1997/WG.I/WP.1)

Documentation

Report of the Secretariat on ways and means of improving the work of the Committee (CEDAW/C/1999/I/4)

Report on the implementation of the Platform for Action based on its review of reports of States parties (CEDAW/C/1999/I/5)

Working paper containing the draft rules of procedure (CEDAW/C/1997/WG.I/WP.1)

Item 9. Provisional agenda for the twenty-first session

At its tenth session, the Committee decided that the draft provisional agenda for the following session of the Committee would be approved at the end of each session.

Documentation

Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-first session of the Committee

Item 10. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twentieth session

Annex

Proposed organization of work

Tuesday, 19 January 1999

404th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 1.*	Opening of the session
	Item 2.	Solemn declaration by the new members of the Committee
	Item 3.	Election of officers
	Item 4.	Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
	Item 5.	Report of the Chairperson on activities undertaken between the nineteenth and twentieth sessions of the Committee
405th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 7.*	Implementation of article 21 of the Convention: introductory statement
	Item 8.	Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee: introductory statement
	—	Working Group of the Whole: composition of Working Groups I and II and issues for discussion

Wednesday, 20 January 1999

10 a.m. (Closed meeting)	*Item 7.*	Implementation of article 21 of the Convention
	—	Working Group of the Whole
3 p.m. (Closed meeting)	—	Working Group of the Whole

Thursday, 21 January 1999

406th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties
	—	Algeria, initial report (CEDAW/C/DZA/1)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative
407th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Algeria, initial report (CEDAW/C/DZA/1)
	—	Questions by experts
	Items 7 and 8.	Working Group I

Friday, 22 January 1999

408th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties
	—	Kyrgyzstan, initial report (CEDAW/C/KGZ/1)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative
409th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Kyrgyzstan, initial report (CEDAW/C/KGZ/1)
	—	Questions by experts
	Items 7 and 8.	Working Group II

Monday, 25 January 1999

410th meeting 10 a.m.	Item 6.	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties
	—	Liechtenstein, initial report (CEDAW/C/LIE/1)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative
411th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Liechtenstein, initial report (CEDAW/C/LIE/1)
	—	Questions by experts
	Items 7 and 8.	Working Group I

Tuesday, 26 January 1999

412th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties
	—	Replies (Algéria)
3 p.m.	*Items 7 and 8.*	Working Group of the Whole

Wednesday, 27 January 1999

413th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Replies (Kyrgyzstan)
414th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Replies (Liechtenstein)

Thursday, 28 January 1999

415th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Greece, combined second and third periodic reports (CEDAW/C/GRC/2–3)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative and replies to questions posed by experts

416th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Greece, combined second and third periodic reports (CEDAW/C/GRC/2–3)
	Items 7 and 8.	Working Group of the Whole

Friday, 29 January 1999

417th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Thailand, combined second and third periodic reports (CEDAW/C/THA/2–3)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative and replies to questions posed by experts
418th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Thailand, combined second and third periodic reports (CEDAW/C/THA/2–3)
	Item 6.	Working Group of the Whole, concluding comments on initial reports

Monday, 1 February 1999

419th meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	China, combined third and fourth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/CHN/3–4 and Add.1 and 2)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative and replies to questions posed by experts
420th meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	China, combined third and fourth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/CHN/3–4 and Add.1 and 2)

Tuesday, 2 February 1999

421st meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	China, combined third and fourth periodic reports (CEDAW/C/CHN/3–4 and Add.1 and 2)
3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Working Group of the Whole, concluding comments on periodic reports

Wednesday, 3 February 1999

422nd meeting 10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Colombia, fourth periodic report (CEDAW/C/COL/4 and Add.1)
	—	Introduction by State party's representative and replies to questions posed by experts
423rd meeting 3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Consideration of reports submitted by States parties (continued)
	—	Colombia, fourth periodic report (CEDAW/C/COL/4 and Add.1)

Thursday, 4 February 1999

10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	Working Group of the Whole, concluding comments on periodic reports
3 p.m.	*Item 6.*	Working Group of the Whole, concluding comments on periodic reports

Friday, 5 February 1999

10 a.m.	*Item 6.*	**Working Group of the Whole, concluding comments on periodic reports**
424th meeting 3 p.m.	*Items 7 and 8.*	**Reports of Working Groups I and II**
	Item 9.	**Draft provisional agenda for the twenty-first session**
	Item 10.	**Adoption of the report of the Committee on its twentieth session**

United Nations CEDAW/C/1999/I/2

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Twentieth session
19 January–5 February 1999
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Report of the Secretary-General

1. Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women provides that States parties shall undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures that they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Convention and on the progress made in that respect. Reports are to be submitted within one year after the entry into force of the Convention for the State concerned and thereafter at least every four years, and further whenever the Committee so requests.

2. Rule 47 of the rules of procedure of the Committee provides that, at each session, the Secretary-General shall notify the Committee of the non-receipt of any report required from a State party under article 18 of the Convention. Annex I to the present report lists the States parties whose reports were overdue as at 30 November 1998.

3. Annex II lists the reports submitted by States parties up to 30 November 1998 that have not yet been considered by the Committee.

* CEDAW/C/1999/I/1.

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ANNEX I

States parties whose reports are due and have not yet been submitted to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

State party	Date due
A. Initial reports	
Albania	10 June 1995
Angola	17 October 1987
Bahamas	5 November 1994
Benin	11 April 1993
Bhutan	30 September 1982
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 October 1994
Botswana	12 September 1997
Brazil	2 March 1985
Burundi	7 February 1993
Cambodia	14 November 1993
Cameroon	22 September 1995
Cape Verde	3 September 1982
Central African Republic	21 July 1992
Chad	9 July 1996
Comoros	30 November 1995
Congo	25 August 1983
Costa Rica	4 May 1987
Côte d'Ivoire	17 January 1997
Dominica	3 September 1982
Eritrea	5 October 1996

State party	Date due
Estonia	20 November 1992
Fiji	27 September 1996
Gambia	16 May 1994
Grenada	29 September 1991
Guinea	8 September 1983
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1986
Haiti	3 September 1982
India	8 August 1994
Kuwait	2 October 1995
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1982
Latvia	14 May 1993
Lebanon	21 May 1998
Lesotho	21 September 1996
Liberia	16 August 1985
Malaysia	4 August 1996
Maldives	1 July 1994
Malta	7 April 1992
Mozambique	16 May 1998
Myanmar	21 August 1998
Pakistan	11 May 1997
Papua New Guinea	11 February 1996
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1986
Saint Lucia	7 November 1983
Samoa	25 October 1993

State party	Date due
Seychelles	4 June 1993
Sierra Leone	11 December 1984
Singapore	4 November 1989
Switzerland	26 May 1998
Tajikistan	25 October 1994
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 February 1995
Togo	26 October 1984
Trinidad and Tobago	11 February 1991
Turkmenistan	31 May 1998
Uzbekistan	18 August 1996
Vanuatu	8 October 1996

B. Second periodic reports

Angola	17 October 1991
Benin	11 April 1997
Bhutan	30 September 1986
Bolivia	8 July 1995
Brazil	2 March 1989
Burundi	7 February 1997
Cambodia	14 November 1997
Cape Verde	3 September 1986
Central African Republic	21 July 1997
Congo	25 August 1987
Costa Rica	4 May 1991

State party	Date due
Croatia	9 October 1997
Czech Republic	24 March 1997
Dominica	3 September 1986
Estonia	20 November 1996
Gabon	20 February 1988
Gambia	16 May 1998
Grenada	29 September 1995
Guinea	8 September 1987
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1990
Guyana	3 September 1986
Haiti	3 September 1986
India	8 August 1998
Jordan	31 July 1997
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1986
Latvia	14 May 1997
Liberia	16 August 1989
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 June 1994
Madagascar	16 April 1994
Malawi	11 April 1992
Maldives	1 July 1998
Mali	10 October 1990
Malta	7 April 1996
Morocco	21 July 1998
Namibia	23 December 1997
Nepal	22 May 1996

State party	Date due
Netherlands	22 August 1996
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1990
Saint Lucia	7 November 1987
Samoa	25 October 1997
Seychelles	4 June 1997
Sierra Leone	11 December 1993
Slovakia	27 June 1998
Slovenia	5 August 1997
Tajikistan	25 October 1998
Trinidad and Tobago	11 February 1995
Togo	26 October 1988
Viet Nam	19 March 1987
Zimbabwe	12 June 1996

State party	Date due
C. Third periodic reports	
Angola	17 October 1995
Bhutan	30 September 1990
Brazil	2 March 1993
Cape Verde	3 September 1990
Congo	25 August 1991
Costa Rica	4 May 1995
Cyprus	22 August 1991
Dominica	3 September 1990
El Salvador	18 September 1990

State party	Date due
France	13 January 1993
Gabon	20 February 1992
Ghana	1 February 1995
Guatemala	11 September 1991
Guinea	8 September 1991
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1994
Guyana	3 September 1990
Haiti	3 September 1990
Kenya	8 April 1993
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1990
Liberia	16 August 1993
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 June 1998
Madagascar	16 April 1998
Malawi	11 April 1996
Mali	10 October 1994
Mauritius	8 August 1993
Mongolia	3 September 1990
Paraguay	6 May 1996
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1994
Saint Lucia	7 November 1991
Senegal	7 March 1994
Sierra Leone	11 December 1997
Sri Lanka	7 November 1990
Togo	26 October 1992
Tunisia	20 October 1994

State party	Date due
Uganda	21 August 1994
Viet Nam	19 March 1991
Zambia	21 July 1994

State party	Date due

D. Fourth periodic reports

Argentina	14 August 1998
Australia	27 August 1996
Barbados	3 September 1994
Belarus	3 September 1994
Bhutan	30 September 1994
Brazil	2 March 1997
Bulgaria	10 March 1995
Cape Verde	3 September 1994
Congo	25 August 1995
Cuba	3 September 1994
Cyprus	22 August 1998
Dominica	3 September 1994
Ecuador	9 December 1994
Egypt	18 October 1994
El Salvador	18 September 1994
Equatorial Guinea	22 November 1997
Ethiopia	10 October 1994
France	13 January 1997
Gabon	20 February 1996

State party	Date due
Greece	7 July 1996
Guatemala	11 September 1995
Guinea	8 August 1995
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1998
Guyana	3 September 1994
Haiti	3 September 1994
Honduras	2 April 1996
Hungary	3 September 1994
Indonesia	13 October 1997
Italy	10 July 1998
Kenya	8 April 1997
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1994
Liberia	16 August 1997
Mali	10 October 1998
Mauritius	8 August 1997
Mongolia	3 September 1994
Nigeria	13 July 1998
Panama	28 November 1994
Poland	3 September 1994
Portugal	3 September 1994
Romania	6 February 1995
Rwanda	3 September 1994
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1998
Saint Lucia	7 November 1995
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	3 September 1994

State party	Date due
Senegal	7 March 1998
Sri Lanka	4 November 1994
Thailand	8 September 1998
Togo	26 October 1996
Tunisia	20 October 1998
Uganda	21 August 1998
Ukraine	3 September 1994
United Republic of Tanzania	19 September 1998
Uruguay	8 November 1994
Venezuela	1 June 1996
Viet Nam	19 March 1995
Yemen	29 June 1997
Yugoslavia	28 March 1995
Zambia	21 July 1998

ANNEX II

States parties whose reports are have been submitted but have not yet been considered by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
A. Initial reports			
Belize[ac]	15 September 1991	19 September 1996	CEDAW/C/BLZ/1-2
Democratic Republic of the Congo[abc]	16 November 1987	1 March 1994	CEDAW/C/ZAR/1
Georgia[c]	25 November 1995	9 March 1998	CEDAW/C/GEO/1
Jordan	31 July 1993	27 October 1997	CEDAW/C/JOR/1
Nepal	22 May 1992	16 November 1998	CEDAW/C/NPL/1
Republic of Moldova	3 July 1995	26 October 1998	CEDAW/C/MDA/1
B. Second periodic reports			
Belize[ac]	15 June 1995	19 June 1996	CEDAW/C/BLZ/1-2
Burkina Faso[a]	13 November 1992	11 December 1997	CEDAW/C/BFA/2-3
Chile[ac]	6 January 1995	9 March 1995	CEDAW/C/CHI/2
Democratic Republic of the Congo[abc]	16 November 1991	24 October 1996	CEDAW/C/ZAR/2
Equatorial Guinea[a]	22 November 1989	6 January 1994	CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3
Germany	9 August 1990	8 October 1996	CEDAW/C/DEU/2-3
Iraq	12 September 1991	13 October 1998	CEDAW/C/IRQ/2-3
Ireland[c]	22 January 1991	6 February 1997	CEDAW/C/IRL/2-3
Jamaica	18 November 1989	17 February 1998	CEDAW/C/JAM/2-4
Uruguay	8 November 1986	3 February 1998	CEDAW/C/URY/2-3

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
C. Third periodic reports			
Austria	30 April 1991	25 April 1997	CEDAW/C/AUT/3-4
Belarus	3 September 1990	1 July 1993	CEDAW/C/BLR/3
Belgium	9 September 1994	29 September 1998	CEDAW/C/BEL/3-4
Democratic Republic of the Congo[abc]	16 November 1995	2 July 1998	CEDAW/C/COD/3
Egypt[c]	18 October 1990	30 January 1996	CEDAW/C/EGY/3
Equatorial Guinea[a]	22 November 1993	6 January 1994	CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3
Finland	4 October 1995	28 January 1997	CEDAW/C/FIN/3
Germany	9 August 1994	8 October 1996	CEDAW/C/DEU/2-3
Iceland	3 July 1994	15 July 1998	CEDAW/C/ICE/3-4
Iraq	12 September 1995	13 October 1998	CEDAW/C/IRQ/2-3
Ireland[c]	22 January 1995	7 August 1997	CEDAW/C/IRL/2-3
Jamaica	18 November 1993	17 February 1998	CEDAW/C/JAM/2-4
Luxembourg	4 March 1998	12 March 1998	CEDAW/C/LUX/3
Spain[ac]	4 February 1993	20 May 1996	CEDAW/C/ESP/3
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland[ac]	7 May 1995	16 August 1995 8 August 1997	CEDAW/C/UK/3 CEDAW/C/UK/3/Add.1
Uruguay	8 November 1990	3 February 1998	CEDAW/C/URY/2-3
Yugoslavia	28 March 1991	14 October 1998	CEDAW/C/YUG/3
D. Fourth periodic reports			
Austria	30 April 1995	25 April 1997	CEDAW/C/AUT/3-4
Belgium	9 September 1998	29 September 1998	CEDAW/C/BEL/3-4

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
Denmark	21 May 1996	9 January 1997	CEDAW/C/DEN/4
Germany	9 September 1998	27 October 1998	CEDAW/C/DEU/4
Iceland	3 July 1998	15 July 1998	CEDAW/C/ICE/3-4
Jamaica	18 November 1997	17 February 1998	CEDAW/C/JAM/2-4
Japan	25 July 1998	24 July 1998	CEDAW/C/JPN/4
Nicaragua	26 November 1994	16 June 1994	CEDAW/C/NIC/4
Spain[a]	4 February 1997	20 October 1998	CEDAW/C/ESP/4
Sweden	3 September 1994	21 May 1996	CEDAW/C/SWE/4

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[a] Reports that have been translated, reproduced and made available in all official languages.

[b] By a communication dated 20 May 1997, the Secretariat was informed by the Member State formerly known as Zaire that the name of the State had been changed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

[c] To be considered by the Committee at its twenty-first session, to be held in New York in June 1999.

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Twentieth session
19 January–5 February 1999
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of article 21 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Reports provided by specialized agencies of the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex), specialized agencies of the United Nations have been invited to submit to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, at its twentieth session, reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities. The reports received will be issued as addenda to the present document.

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Reports provided by specialized agencies of the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

1. On behalf of the Committee, the Secretariat invited the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), on 29 October 1998, to submit to the Committee by 5 December 1998 a report on information provided by States to FAO on the implementation of article 14 and related articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which would supplement the information contained in the reports of the States parties to the Convention that will be considered at the twentieth session. Annexed to the present note are country briefs prepared by FAO on Algeria and China.

2. Other information sought by the Committee refers to activities, programmes and policy decisions undertaken by FAO to promote the implementation of article 14 and related articles of the Convention.

3. The report annexed hereto has been submitted in compliance with the Committee's requests.

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Annex

Country briefs of States parties prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for consideration at the twentieth session of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

ALGERIA

Agriculture

In 1995 the agricultural sector produced 9.6 percent of the GDP. In the same year, 15 percent of the volume of the total imports were food products, of which 52 percent were basic food stuff, such as cereals. The country's dependence on food imports may increase further despite the agricultural potential of the country.

The Government has addressed this issue by elaborating a development strategy for the agricultural sector, aimed at achieving sustainable development and food security, which also takes into account the social dimension of the population.

Women in Agriculture

Women comprise 50 percent of the rural population which, in 1987, was approximately 49.2 percent of the total population.

Women play an important role in the economic and social development of the country. They contribute to the production of local artisan products (carpets, pottery, etc.) and they are actively involved in agricultural activities, especially in the mountainous regions (Chenour, Kabylie, Jijel, Aures).

The extent to which women participate in food production and food security is severely underestimated, mainly because of the scarcity of accurate and up-to-date disaggregated data and statistics, especially at the household level.

Women contribute to household food security in three basic ways:

- women provide a substantial amount of labour required on farm to produce food;
- women are almost universally responsible for the preparation of food;
- women use a high percentage of their income to buy food from wages they earn off the farm in agricultural and non-agricultural jobs.

Women in decision-making

Gender gaps exist with respect to women's access to power and resources necessary to achieve food security (political representation, education, technology, credit, research, extension services, etc.).

Algerian women lag far behind their counterparts in the rest of the world in their economic and social participation and decision-making, in spite of substantial improvements in institutional support since the early 1980s.

Women's access to productive resources

Legal, social and institutional barriers are responsible for the great inequalities in women's access to productive resources such as land, credit technology and education.

Land. Women rarely own arable land, although civil law permits ownership and the buying and selling of land by women[1]. Without the ability to exercise their right to land ownership, women lack collateral and are thus denied access to other resources such as credit and technology.

Credit. Rural women have very little opportunity to access credit, which is important for them in order to increase agricultural production. Some of the major impediments to women's access to credit are illiteracy, lack of information, tradition and custom, and, as above mentioned, the absence of collateral, especially in the form of land ownership.

Technology. Women perform their work with very little access to labour-saving equipment and technology, which increase the efficiency of farm and household work, improve agricultural yields and increase food production. Women's access to technology is limited by several factors including their lack of credit to purchase technology. Tradition encourages men to take control over mechanised land preparation, leaving women with the more labour intensive and time-consuming tasks such as hand-picking, hand-weeding and harvesting.

Policy planning

The significant contributions of women farmers are seldom taken into account. Planners and policy-makers rely almost exclusively on the official statistics which do not count for women's labour. A common shortcoming of microstatistics is the undercounting of women's extensive participation in production, in both agriculture and income-generating activities within the informal sectors. The lack of gender disaggregated data does not allow an evaluation of women's economic contribution and facilitates planners to exclude women farmers from policies and support programmes.

Mechanisms to promote the advancement of women

The Government of Algeria has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.

A Committee for the Advancement of Women has been created within the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs. The Committee is composed of various experts on issues relating to the status of women. However, the concept of rural women and issues relating to the agricultural sector are absent in the work of the Committee.

Women's organizations, and in particular rural women's organizations, are increasing in number. The rural organizations focus on literacy and health, and provide support to rural women's activities

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, within its five-year strategy framework for development, has undertaken measures to support the advancement of rural women. These measures are in accordance with the recommendations relating to rural women produced by the National Consultative Committee on Agriculture, and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. They aim to promote the social and economic status of rural women and their full integration in the development process.

[1] FAO. Rural women and food security: current situation and perspectives (1998).

FAO has developed a Regional Plan of Action for the Near East Region (1996-2000) with the aim to stimulate growth with equity in relation to agricultural and rural development in the Near East. In Algeria, FAO is also implementing a development programme aimed at the integration of rural women in development through the elaboration of an intervention strategy to ameliorate the economic situation of rural women and their families.

Recommendations

- Statistical information on the specific social and economic characteristics of rural women in their various situations is needed in order to develop strategic goals and objectives, and to design projects to benefit rural women.
- Research should be carried out on women's contribution to the national economy; the role of indigenous women in the management of the natural resources and the environment; the various aspects of food processing and marketing; the gender division of labour in productive and reproductive tasks; technology to improve women's productivity and incomes.
- Gender sensitisation and training should be carried out among decision and policy makers in economics, agriculture and the social fields.
- More women in decision-making positions are needed together with gender sensitisation training to be made available to planners, policy-makers and researchers in agricultural issues.
- There is also a need to establish a mechanism to implement prevailing legislation in regards to land rights and to ensure equal access to land titles for both women and men, and particularly for female headed-households.
- Women's access to credit and technology should be improved through facilitating women's participation in users groups and through the promotion of women's credit groups.

CHINA

Agriculture

China is still experiencing a period of transition from a central planning economy towards a market economy. During this time, the agricultural and rural sector of China has enjoyed a stable development also due to the favourable circumstances of economic reform provided by the Government.

Approximately fifteen years ago, the Government introduced a contract system for the use of farm-land, which not only liberated the rural labour force but also brought significant changes to the national economy and rural areas. Substantive measures have been taken to stabilise and improve the farm-land contract system throughout the country. In order to ensure that all farmers enjoy long-term land-use rights, the Government has been promoting the renewal of land contracts for farmers for a new thirty-year term as the previous fifteen-year term contracts expire[2].

To achieve the goal of eliminating poverty by the end of the century, the Government issued a policy of "Counterpart assistance for poverty alleviation and economic development", whereby the more advanced provinces, in economic terms, should provide the necessary development assistance to the poorer provinces[3].

Since 1978, when China's Government undertook a reform policy, the development gap between eastern China and central and western China has increased. East China with a favourable climate, a higher number of resources, better infrastructures and easier access to markets is richer. With the aim to narrow the gap, the Government has decided to provide more assistance to the central and western parts of China, through favourable policies, financial, scientific and technological support.

The Central Economic Working Conference, held in December 1997, elaborated guidelines for the country's economic development in 1998, which give priority to the continuous economic reform and further promotion of the agricultural sector as the foundation of the national economy.

Rural migration

China is experiencing a large scale temporary and permanent migration which is simultaneously both a spontaneous response to and consequence of economic reform and an integral component of government policy[4]. Migration is facilitated and encouraged by the Chinese Government on the grounds that it promotes 'more balanced development', the redistribution of surplus labour, the promotion of efficient, sustainable and modern

[2] FAO. China Annual Report (1997).
[3] Ibid.
[4] FAO. Rural migration in rural development in the evolving market economy (1997).

agricultural development and rapid wealth creation to the benefit of all categories of the rural population and especially those in the poorer regions.

Male labourers account for the majority of the migrating population from rural areas. The proportion of female migrants declined from 55.8 percent in 1987 to 45.3 percent in 1990 (China Census, 1990). One of the reasons for reversed gender dominance can be attributed to the flourishing of China's economy during the late 1980s. During this period, the proportion of male migrants seeking better economic opportunities in urban areas increased relatively faster compared with other patterns of rural mobility. Moreover, the proportion of the female-dominated movement, such as family reunion and marriage oriented migration, decreased during the same period[5].

Witin China, the proportion of women in the migrating population in developed regions is larger than that in less developed regions.

Role of women in agriculture

In China, women play a vital role in the production, preparation, preservation and distribution of food supplies. Indeed, women comprise up to 74 percent[6] of the agricultural labour force, depending on the region. However, past development plans and extension services have focused on men and their farm production needs.

A direct consequence of the male out-migration outlined above, is the growing phenomenon of the "feminization of agriculture". In addition, the female proportion of migrants are usually young and unmarried, leading to the "greying of farming"[7], where older women, become the principal farmers. The women left behind are expected to take sole responsibility for agricultural production and housework. These combined demands on their labour often leave them tired and exhausted. Where older women are left to undertake agricultural activities, they are rarely able to maintain previous levels of cultivation. Furthermore, the declining importance of agriculture and the comparatively low status of women have meant that the feminization of agriculture has led to a mutual and further downgrading of the status of women and the status of agriculture.

Increased male migration caused by the expansion of the market economy and poverty conditions of rural households, has contributed to the emergence of female-headed households.

Women play a major role in the commodity production through specialised households. Over 50 percent of workers engaged in specialised activities are women, and they generate 55 to 65 percent of the total commodity output value.

Mechanisms to promote the advancement of women

As part of their progressive efforts towards economic transition, in 1978, the Chinese Government introduced the household contract system which improved the rural economy and expanded the diversified agricultural economy. The household contract system has changed

[5] Ibid.

[6] FAO. Rural women and food security: current situation and perspectives (1998).

[7] Ibid.

women's work patterns, allowing them to allocate their time between agricultural and household work.

The All-China Women's Federation is a national organization whose principal function is to guard the interests of women and children. It works in close collaboration with the Government utilizing the experience of professional women to help rural women.

The responsibility for coordination of the implementation of the Chinese programme (which is the Chinese version of the Beijing Platform for Action) lies with the National Working Committee for Children and Women under the State Council. A total of seventeen ministries and commissions and five NGOs are members of the Committee.

The UN system in China has created a Task Force for the follow-up of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to coordinate activities and identify needs for other follow-up support. FAO actively participates in the Task Force.

FAO has commissioned a study of rural migration within the context of rural development and the market economy. FAO has also undertaken a research on the situation of women in China's Northwest arid and semi-arid agriculture and a pilot database for women in agriculture to be used as a planning tool for interventions.

Access to agricultural resources

Land. While women may lack land ownership rights, they have access to land through the means of central allocation per caput[8]. Land is distributed by the state in relation to family size, thus, theoretically a larger household has access to more land, while both men and women can cultivate the land.

Extension services and training. Although women are crucial in agricultural development, particularly because male migration is increasing, their opportunities to access extension services market information and various training courses are limited. Women's opportunities to learn about new and improved technologies in agricultural production are constrained by:

- limited time - women are engaged in both farm activities and housework;
- women's lower level of education;
- extension services that target men, who are considered heads of the households and responsible for duties outside the private sphere.

Recommendations

- Development policies and planning need to take into consideration the roles, responsibilities and needs of women food producers.
- Gender-disaggregated agricultural statistical data is a critical pre-requisite to sensitise development policy-makers.
- Socio-economic and gender awareness and sensitisation training should be made available to planners, policy makers and researchers in agricultural issues, focusing on practical tools to rectify current gender biases in planning, policy making, agricultural research and extension delivery.

[8] Ibid.

- Agricultural extension programmes urgently need to re-orient their services to support the majority of the agricultural labour force: women farmers.
- Extension workers should be retrained to strengthen their skills to work with women farmers.

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Reports provided by specialized agencies of the United Nations on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

World Health Organization

1. On behalf of the Committee, the Secretariat invited the World Health Organization (WHO), on 29 October 1998, to submit to the Committee by 5 December 1998 a report on information provided by States to WHO on the implementation of article 12 and related articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which would supplement the information contained in the reports of those States parties to the Convention to be considered at the twentieth session.

2. Other information sought by the Committee refers to activities, programmes and policy decisions undertaken by WHO to promote the implementation of article 12 and related articles of the Convention.

3. The report annexed hereto has been submitted in compliance with the Committee's requests.

* CEDAW/C/1999/I/1.

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Annex

Information provided by States to the World Health Organization for consideration at the twentieth session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

1. The World Health Organization (WHO) has this year provided data on a selected number of indicators in relation to article 12 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The number of indicators as well as the scope of content of the report will be expanded in collaboration with the Committee for future reports.

1. Maternal health care and family planning

2. Strategic objective C.1. in the Beijing Platform for Action "Increase women's access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable, and quality health care, information and related services" includes specific recommendations regarding maternal health care as well as access to family planning including safe abortion:

> "Provide more accessible, available, and affordable primary health care services of high quality, including sexual and reproductive health care, which includes family planning information and services, and giving particular attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care, as agreed in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development". (107 (e))
>
> "Strengthen and reorient health services, particularly primary health care, in order to ensure universal access to quality health services for women and girls, reduce ill health and maternal morbidity and achieve worldwide agreed-upon goals of reducing maternal mortality by at least 50 per cent; ensure that the necessary services are available at each level of the health system and make reproductive health care accessible through the primary health-care system, to all individuals of the appropriate ages no later than the year 2015". (107 (l))
>
> "Recognize and deal with the health impact of unsafe abortion as a major public health concern as agreed in paragraph 8.25 of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development". (107 (j))
>
> "... and to reduce the recourse to abortion through expanded and improved family-planning services. Prevention of unwanted pregnancies must always be given the highest priority and every attempt should be made to eliminate the need for abortion". (107 (k))

1.1 Prevalence

1.1.1 Maternal mortality,[a] estimates

	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	*Lifetime risk of maternal death; 1 in*
Algeria	160	120
China	95	400
Colombia	100	300
Greece	10	5 000
Kyrgyzstan	110	190
Thailand	200	180

[a] Revised 1990 estimates of maternal mortality (WHO/FRH/MSM/96.11).

1.1.2 Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel

	Antenatal care, percent of total births	*Skilled attendant at delivery, percent of total births*
Algeria[a]	58	77
China[a]	79	85
Colombia[a]	83	85
Greece (1983)[b]	—	99
Kyrgyzstan (1997)[c]	97	98
Thailand[a]	77	71

[a] World Health Organization (WHO). "Global Strategy for Health for All by the year 2000", Second report on monitoring progress, WHO document No.EB83/2 Add.1, 1998.
[b] "Coverage of Maternity Care: A listing of Available Information"; Fourth edition (WHO/RHT/MSM/96.28).
[c] "Abortion Policies: A Global Review", New York, United Nations 1993.

1.1.3 Legality of abortion (as of 1992)[a]

	Abortion allowed to:
Algeria	Save life of woman Preserve physical health Preserve mental health
China	Save life of woman Preserve physical health Preserve mental health When pregnancy is a result of rape or incest When the foetus is impaired For economic and social reasons On request
Colombia	Not at all
Greece	Save life of woman Preserve physical health Preserve mental health When pregnancy is a result of rape or incest When the foetus is impaired For economic and social reasons On request
Kyrgyzstan	Save life of woman Preserve physical health Preserve mental health When pregnancy is a result of rape or incest When the foetus is impaired For economic and social reasons On request
Thailand	Save life of woman Preserve physical health When pregnancy is a result of rape or incest

[a] Singh, S. and Wulf, D. "Estimated Levels of Induced Abortion in six Latin American Countries. International Family Planning Perspective, 1994, 20 (1): 4–13.

1.1.4 Frequency of abortion not provided through approved facilities and/or persons

	Frequency as percentage of live births	*Frequency of abortion per 1,000 women, aged 15–49*
Algeria (1990–1992)[a]	10.5	43
China (1989)[b]	—	26
Colombia (1989)[c]	35.1	34
Greece[d]	110	—
Kyrgyzstan (1996)[e]	—	22
Thailand[f]	—	—

[a] Commission on Human Rights, Preliminary report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, in accordance with Commission resolution 1994/45 (E/CN.4/1995/42), 22 November 1994, para. 96.

[b] "Dilemma and Decision: Unintended Pregnancy and Abortion Worldwide", forthcoming publication, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, New York.

[c] "The State of the World's Population", UNFPA 1998, quoting The World Population Monitoring, United Nations, New York 1996.

[d] "Dilemma and Decision: Unintended Pregnancy and Abortion Worldwide", forthcoming publication, The Alan Guttmacher Institute, New York.

[e] Morrison A. et al., "The socioeconomic impact of Domestic Violence against Women in Chile and Nicaragua",. Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C., United States of America, unpublished data, 1997.

[f] Gomaa, R. A. et al., "Health profile of Egypt", Arab Republic of Egypt, Ministry of Health, Newsletter, 1992, 3(4).

1.1.5 Contraceptive prevalence

	Prevalence of any contraceptive method, percentage	*Prevalence of modern method, percentage*
Algeria[a]	52	49
China[a]	83	80
Colombia[a]	72	59
Greece[a]	—	—
Kyrgyzstan[b] Percentage of married women	60	49
Thailand[a]	74	72

[a] Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), "Egypt Demographic and Health Survey", National Population Council, Cairo, Egypt, 1995–1996.

[b] Petrak, J. A., et al., "The prevalence of sexual assault in genitourinary medicine clinic: service implications", Genitourinary medicine, 1995, 71:98–102, Country UNK.

2. Violence against women

3. Although the Convention does not explicitly deal with violence against women, except in the areas of trafficking and prostitution (art. 6), many of its anti-discrimination clauses provide protection for women against violence. In addition, a number of CEDAW general recommendations deal with violence, in particular Nos. 12 and 19. No. 19 argues that the definition of discrimination in article 1 of the Convention covers gender based violence which is prohibited in articles 2, 5, 11, 12 and 16. The Beijing Platform for Action deals comprehensively with violence against women with recommendations to States to take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women, to study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures and to eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking (paras. 112–130). The reports of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women also provide recommendations on all forms of violence against women. In terms of regional instruments, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women was adopted in May 1996.

4. Fundamental human rights such as the right to life, the right to liberty and security of the person and the right to be free from torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment apply equally to the protection of women against violence in the private sphere. State responsibility for violence against women is referred to in the Convention where States parties are required to eliminate discrimination against women by "any person, organization or enterprise" (art. 2 (e)). State responsibility for private acts of violence is supported in CEDAW general recommendation 19 and in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.[11]

5. With respect to health care CEDAW general recommendation No. 19 recommends that,

> "States parties should establish or support services for victims of family violence, rape sex assault and other forms of gender-based violence, including refugees, specially trained health workers, rehabilitation and counselling".

6. Paragraph 125 (e) of the Beijing Platform for Action recommends that States,

> "Recognize, support and promote the fundamental role of intermediate institutions, such as primary health-care centres, family planning centres (and) existing school health services".

7. WHO recognized violence as a public health priority in WHA resolution 49.25 and promoted its prevention in WHA resolution 50.19, including, "domestic violence that is directed mainly at women and children". Domestic or family and community violence is included under all general references to violence against women in human rights standards. CEDAW general recommendation No. 19 recommends that States parties,

> "ensure that laws against family violence ... give adequate protection to all women, and respect their integrity and dignity".

8. The Beijing Platform for Action specifically refers to domestic violence in its recommendation to States to

> "Promote research, collect data and compile statistics especially concerning domestic violence" (p. 129 (a)).

9. The Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which deal primarily with family/domestic and community violence are annexed to General Assembly resolution 52/86

of 12 December 1997. The model provides recommendations mainly in the area of criminal justice but also include recommendations in the area of health and social services.

2.1 Prevalence

2.1.1 Colombia: Data from fieldwork in 1995, study part of WHO's database on Violence against Women[2]

10. 19 per cent of all women have at sometime been physically abused by their partner. 5.3 per cent of all women have been raped (completed rape) in their lives, 44.2 per cent of those women were raped by their partner, 14.2 per cent by a family member, 14.3 per cent by an unknown man.

Notes

[a] Preliminary results, National Demographic and Health Survey, 1995.

[b] World Health Organization (WHO), "Female Genital Mutilation: An Overview", WHO 1998.

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Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1. On behalf of the Committee, the Secretariat invited the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), on 29 October 1998, to submit to the Committee by 5 December 1998 a report on information provided by States to UNESCO on the implementation of article 10 and related articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which would supplement the information contained in the reports of those States Parties to the Convention to be considered at the twentieth session of the Committee.

2. Other information sought by the Committee refers to activities, programmes and policy decisions undertaken by UNESCO to promote the implementation of article 10 and related articles of the Convention.

3. The report annexed hereto has been submitted in compliance with the Committee's requests.

* CEDAW/C/1999/I/1.

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Annex

UNESCO report on implementation of the Convention

1. In accordance with Article 22 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, specialized agencies are invited to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities and provide information that could supplement the reports of States parties which will be considered by the Committee at its twentieth session.

I. UNESCO's contribution to the implementation of CEDAW within the scope of the organization's activities

A. Priorities

2. Highest priority continues to be given to basic education opportunities for the "unreached", with special emphasis on the educational needs of girls and women in the rural areas; literacy and adult education for women, and guidance and counselling for school-aged girls. Priority continues to be given to women's integration at all levels and in all areas of social life, including increasing participation in political decision-making and in the process of developing a culture of peace through tolerance and non-violence, particularly in parts of Africa, the Mediterranean and the Balkan countries. UNESCO's overriding aim in this regard is to help women express their views and expectations as to how peace can be achieved and/or maintained in their societies and how their knowledge and skills can be applied in practice at all levels, from the community to the international level.

3. Priority is given also to developing gender-sensitive data collection, statistics and indicators as tools for evaluating the progress achieved in UNESCO's fields of competence; conducting appropriate staff training; and applying guidelines for gender mainstreaming in all planning, programming, implementation and evaluation. Other priority areas include legal literacy at various levels of education (popularizing CEDAW and accompanying it with information in national laws, of particular concern to women and girls); the elimination of sexist stereotypes, and the implementation of the Toronto Platform for Action regarding women and the media.

B. Mechanisms

4. In order to obtain a greater multiplier effect of UNESCO's action, support continues to be given to UNESCO's Collective Consultation with NGOs working on Women, Girls and Gender Equality, created in 1997. Six themes were selected as priority areas of work, namely: "Women, science and technology"; "Sexist language, stereotypes"; "Women and a culture of peace"; "The girl child" (education, health, family); "Statistics and gender-disaggregated data"; and "Eradicating poverty" (micro-finance complemented with educational and managerial skills).

5. UNESCO enforces gender mainstreaming throughout its secretariat through a network of gender focal points that have been designated in all programme sectors, relevant administrative units, and field offices. The focal points communicate regularly with the Gender Unit, meet periodically to discuss issues of common concern, and are actively involved in the secretariat's cooperation with relevant non-governmental organizations. There is also increasing interaction between UNESCO's focal points and the gender focal points of other United Nations and international entities, in terms of exchanging information on gender mainstreaming practices and in implementation.

C. Accountability and evaluation

6. The new budget coding structure which was developed for the 1998–1999 biennium will help the gender coordinator considerably in monitoring the progress of women-specific projects and activities and their periodic evaluation. It will be reinforced with the use of specific budget codes for women-gender activities which are expected to ensure that those activities do not suffer from budget cuts.

7. The UNESCO secretariat is in the process of developing a new integrated programming/budgeting/monitoring system which will be fully operational by the start of the 2000–2001 biennium. The system aims at providing a strategic view of the activities being carried out and their impact, through quantitative and qualitative indicators which will monitor the action taken in order to optimize the use of resources. Other forms of accountability are being explored, notably the possibility of introducing a gender component in the periodic performance reports of the staff.

D. The promotion of women within the UNESCO secretariat

8. Although specific staff training programmes to support gender mainstreaming have not yet been developed for the UNESCO secretariat, some training is provided as part of the basic orientation courses for newly recruited staff, and other training programmes have been organized by the Bureau of Personnel.

9. To promote the advancement of women within the secretariat, greater gender balance in UNESCO's secretariat staff continues to be achieved as a result of the Director-General's deliberate recruitment and promotion policy favouring women's access to professional and senior categories.

II. Measures taken by UNESCO to implement the provisions of CEDAW, particularly in the countries being considered by the Committee

Article 3 Human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men in all fields, particularly in the political, social, economic and cultural fields

Article 14 Rural women

10. The situation of women and girls in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate owing to the suppression of women's universal human rights by the present authorities. These include the denial of access to health services, to humanitarian aid, and to education and training, and the refusal to allow women to work outside the home. In light of this situation, UNESCO, jointly with le Centre de recherche et d'études documentaires sur l'Afghanistan (CEREDAF) and the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), organized a meeting on the role of Afghan women in Afghan history (Paris, 11 December 1998), to remind people about Afghan women's active role in the history of Afghanistan and of their ongoing determination to fight for their fundamental rights and the safety and happiness of their families. The aim of the meeting was also to provide space for dialogue to mobilize public opinion around the issue of the rights denied to women in Afghanistan.

11. The UNESCO office in Rabat, Morocco, continues to assist the Government of **Mauritania** in the development and implementation of its national plan of action to promote the status of women and gender equality. Funded by UNFPA, this project has, since its creation in 1996, successfully trained young professionals at the local and national levels, on the conceptualization of educational planning programmes; the elaboration of a political platform for the family; and a communication plan parallel to the national plan of action, to be carried out by the State Secretariat for the Advancement of Women. More recently, in commemoration of World Population Day, a pilot radio programme for women was launched (Senegal, 11 July 1998) as well as the first issue of a quarterly magazine. Additionally, a study to develop a pilot programme for functional literacy has been commissioned to the Secretariat d'Etat à l'alphabétisation et à l'enseignement originel (SEAEO). A training guide for trainers and a study on self-training centres have been developed; and the training of trainers will be finalized by the end of December 1998.

Article 5 Elimination of prejudices and stereotypes

Article 10 Education, revision of textbooks, elimination of stereotypes

12. Considering the success of the earlier versions of the Guidelines on Non-sexist Language, an improved and updated third edition (in English and French) will be available in January 1999. The handbook will be distributed widely through UNESCO's field offices, national commissions and non-governmental organizations. A similar project focusing on gender terminology in Arabic is being initiated by UNESCO Amman, which is working to develop a simplified glossary of gender terms explaining the concepts and reasoning behind gender issues. The glossary will be divided into two parts: one on sectoral concepts in gender issues, and one on gender-related terminology. UNESCO Amman, in collaboration with UNESCO's Gender Unit and UNIFEM, is also conducting a study on gender role stereotypes in primary schools.

13. Additionally, a manual and video for secondary schools in **Chile**, entitled "Cambio de Piel — Change of Skin", was produced by the Chilean non-governmental organization La Morada, in collaboration with UNESCO Chile and the Spanish Institute for Women. The material was prepared in close collaboration with boys and girls from secondary schools, who had a chance to express themselves in their own words on what the term "gender" meant to them.

14. UNESCO's Basic Education Division's training manual, entitled "Gender Sensitivity", now exists in Arabic. The manual is a culmination of seven years of training experience in Africa, the Arab States and Asia and the Pacific. It was originally published in English and French.

15. A handbook on the rights of girls and women is being developed in three regions — Africa: Tunisia; Arab States: Kuwait; Asia: Sri Lanka — by UNESCO's Education Programme. The handbook focuses on CEDAW, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It targets primary school girls and boys, particularly girls, since quite a large number of them leave school early to work, carry out domestic chores, care for their younger siblings, or to marry.

16. UNESCO's Education Programme has also established a family/community multipurpose resource centre, which was launched in Kuwait (1996–1998), with the objective of providing an appropriate environment for the healthy development of children. The project takes a comprehensive approach to helping people learn how to meet the basic learning needs of children by training those who deal with children (parents, trainers, care-givers, the elderly and youth). The project also attempts to improve the quality of life and status of families (particularly of women) through life-long learning and income-generating activities.

17. Additionally, a multimedia project consisting of a publication and a CD-Rom has recently been launched by UNESCO's Culture Programme. The project entitled "Gypsy, Happy If You Are Free" reveals, through images, words and music, the culturally rich Gypsy world. Since Gypsy women and girls occupy a central role in that world, a chapter is devoted to their work, photos and poems. The project is an attempt by UNESCO to reinforce Gypsy women's fight against discrimination, by providing them a space where they can express themselves.

18. The report Male Roles and Masculinities in the Perspective of a Culture of Peace (recommendations of an expert group meeting that met in Oslo, September 1997, organized by UNESCO's Women and a Culture of Peace Unit), recommended, *inter alia*, that boys should be socialized in ways that promote gender-sensitive behaviour as a step towards curbing male-led violence and promoting values consistent with a culture of peace. It has been widely disseminated and continues to gather support through its follow-up activities. It has also been used to introduce the topic in several cities in the Russian Federation, strengthening the "'No' to violence" men's association. It is also included on the Web site of the European Pro-Feminist Men's Network, on the CD–Rom "Cité, Citoyenneté et Genre". Male groups in South Africa are among those that have been expressing their support for women's rights through the organization of peace marches. The report exists in English, French, Russian and Spanish. A Kiswahili version is being finalized by the Tanzanian National Commission for UNESCO. A publication of edited papers from the Oslo meeting is currently being prepared as part of the Culture of Peace series.

Article 6 Suppression of the exploitation of women

19. The issue of violence against women and the phenomenon of sexual exploitation violates a number of international Conventions that are very important for UNESCO's mandate. As violence is undoubtedly rooted in poverty, unemployment and poor education, there is a great need for education of different kinds and at various levels to combat this complex problem. Here UNESCO, with its multiple expertise, can play a key role as coordinator and facilitator and be an important complement to the ongoing work of the United Nations agencies in this area.

20. In cooperation with Member States, national institutions, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies, UNESCO continues to reinforce preventive action to combat violence and discrimination against women and to limit the effects of female prostitution in migration-related phenomena from an educational perspective, through activities and projects with local non-governmental organizations.

21. In Eastern and Central Europe and Central Asia, collaboration is ongoing with the Open Society Institute (OSI)/SOROS. They continue to be very active in the area of violence against women and have created a network called Stop trafficking (stop-traffic@solar.cini.utk.edu). UNESCO is also establishing, with OSI/SOROS, international partners and local non-governmental organizations, a subregional women's centre in Budapest. Its objective is to provide educational training for women, but it also will work on real day-to-day problems — i.e., domestic and other types of violence, prostitution, and other matters. The centre will officially open its doors in spring 1999.

22. UNESCO's office in Islamabad has been involved in activities concerning the trafficking in women which have touched on the subject of prostitution. The Constitution of Pakistan specifically mentions prostitution and the obligation of the State to prevent it. In this regard, UNESCO held a regional conference on trafficking in women and children, in collaboration with local partners — i.e., non-governmental organizations, the Government and other United Nations agencies (Karachi, Pakistan, 18–20 December 1997).

Changing cultural attitudes

23. Numerous programmes have been adopted by UNESCO, including initiatives aimed at the consolidation of society around the principles of tolerance and respect for

cultures (release of feature and documentary films, radio and television broadcasts, publication of school textbooks and teaching materials, revision of curriculum content, closer contacts between civic education and human rights education, signature of cooperation agreements between UNESCO and national commissions on the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the promotion of peace, tolerance and human rights, signature of decrees on educational reform and respect for human rights, development of training actions on the theme of "peace and citizenship", and the training of teachers).

24. With a view to changing cultural attitudes and values, support also continues for initiatives taken by the relevant professional organizations with a view to eliminating a portrayal of women that provokes violence and to promoting a more positive and diversified image of women in the media. An example of this action is a meeting being organized by UNESCO in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the United Nations Secretariat Division for the Advancement of Women, "Perspectives on Democracy: Do Women make a Difference?" which will be held at UNESCO from 2 to 4 December 1999.

25. Similar efforts have been made by UNESCO's office in Amman in collaboration with the Jordanian National Committee for Women in Amman, UNIFEM, UNICEF and UNDP to raise awareness on the issue of the impact of media and domestic violence. An Arab Regional Workshop on Domestic Violence was held on this theme in Amman from 22 to 23 November 1998. Preparations to organize a regional meeting of women journalists in the Gulf States is also under way for 1999.

26. Under the framework of the UNESCO/Italy project to train women journalists from the Mediterranean region, a meeting was held on women, media and good governance (Rabat, 27 April–1 May 1998). The aim of the meeting was to define the role of women journalists in civil society and in the Mediterranean democratic process, and to identify difficulties encountered in their profession. The meeting was attended by 30 women from Algeria, Belgium, Egypt, France, Italy, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

27. UNESCO's office in Nairobi assisted the Office of the regional communication adviser for Eastern Africa in the organization of a regional seminar for media women's associations on networking and cooperation (Nairobi, 21–23 October 1998). The aim of the meeting was to strengthen the national association networks; define and formalize the East African media women's associations; and to assess participant's needs with a view to formulating a strategy document. Some of the issues discussed were: the unequal representation of women at decision-making levels; the assignment of women to low-key reporting, writing and production; discriminatory policies in the recruitment of women at the technical and decision-making levels; and lack of motivation due to low job expectations.

Micro-finance and education

28. Priority attention continues to be given to women and girls in countries ravaged in the recent past by armed conflict, aimed at alleviating the effects of violence and providing basic education to refugees and displaced persons, particularly women. The "Knitting Together Nations", a micro-finance and education project to help refugee women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is a successful example of UNESCO's efforts, in cooperation with the World Bank and local non-governmental organizations (Women and Micro-finance: Fashion for Development round-table Paris, December 1997). As a result, their products have become known in France, the Benelux countries, Spain and the United Kingdom.

29. Inspired by the December event, the Spanish non-governmental organization Together In the World, in collaboration with UNESCO and the Government of Spain organized in Palma de Mallorca (24–31 August 1998) a week-long awareness-raising event on women's rights, with a focus on assisting Bosnian refugee women. The week was composed of afternoon seminars organized by UNESCO on the following themes: Women's rights; Women and war; and Women and micro-finance as a tool for development. Parallel to the seminars, craft products were exhibited and sold. A fashion show was also held to showcase knitwear designed by the Bosnian designer Amella Vilic and Bosnian refugee women, hand-knitted by the women. As a follow-up initiative, a telethon was successfully held in mid–December promoting the plight of the Bosnian women, organized by Together In the World and Antenna 3, Madrid, to request assistance from the Spanish public, through donations and in-kind contributions (sewing machines, thread, wool etc.).

30. A similar initiative was held in Luxembourg (12–13 October 1998) under the patronage of Princess Maria Teresa de Luxembourg and UNESCO, in collaboration with the Luxembourg National Commission to UNESCO, the Luxembourg Ministries for the Promotion of Women and Gender, Foreign Affairs, Commerce and Cooperation, and the Minister of Culture. The overall aim of the project for all partners was to assist refugee women and their families from Bosnia-Herzegovina to build a sustainable economic

future, by assisting them to become financially autonomous through micro-finance opportunities.

Peace and conflict-resolution

31. There is also a need for the education and training of victims of violence and trafficking, which would include psychological/sexual/social/economic/legal education in order to facilitate reintegration into society. UNESCO's report "Rape as a tool of war", published in May 1995 in French and English, has recently been translated into Serbo-Croat and distributed to the various non-governmental organizations and institutions concerned. Additionally, UNESCO has established a centre for the development of rehabilitation activities for women in Gorazde. UNESCO has contracted the services of local non-governmental organizations to develop and direct the centre's activities. Training sessions are being held for trainers and recipients in psycho-social rehabilitation of victims of violence, including rape and the sexual health of the women, and in information technology and foreign languages.

32. Women's increasing initiatives in conflict resolution, their struggle in favour of democracy and human rights and their increasingly prominent role in sustaining economic and social development are at the core of UNESCO's Mediterranean and Culture of Peace Programmes. The Programmes are devoted to promoting the status of women within the region, including the Red Sea region and to encouraging trans-Mediterranean exchanges and cooperation as necessary conditions for peace and security in the area.

33. UNESCO's focus on Africa is reflected, *inter alia*, through the Special Project on Women and a Culture of Peace in Africa for 1998–1999. The project, which started in Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Namibia, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania and which will include more countries as it progresses, involves inter-agency peace missions to strengthen women's roles as peace promoters and help amplify local women's voices for peace. Case studies on traditional techniques and on networking and advocacy, education in peace-building skills for gender-sensitive and non-violent conflict resolution are leading modalities.

34. The first in the series of case studies on non-violent traditional methods used by women to promote peace was carried out in Burundi and was presented at a seminar on the "Contribution of Women to a Culture of Peace", in Burundi in April 1998. The seminar brought together women from different geographical regions and sensitivities who all agreed on the importance of women's involvement in the peace process and reconciliation. On the basis of the case studies, and in cooperation with the Forum of African Women Educationists, UNESCO will prepare training modules which will be used in the training of women peace promoters in skills for non-violent, gender-sensitive conflict resolution in Africa. It is expected that improving the skills of women in the area of conflict resolution will increase their participation in the peace process in Africa.

35. A publication entitled *Documented Best Practices of Women in Conflict Resolution using Non-Violent Traditional Methods* is in preparation. The publication was prepared in collaboration with the African Association of Women Researchers for Development, on the basis of papers presented by African women to an inter-agency seminar on the subject of documented best practices. A directory of women working on emergencies and solidarity at the grass-roots level is being prepared in collaboration with Women's International Network.

36. Several meetings have been organized to strengthen women's roles as peace promoters — e.g., in Congo in April 1998, in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and the Integration of Women in Development, and in Tunisia. The Tunisian Women's Union decided to establish a subcommittee on women and a culture of peace which will be an important link to peace initiatives in other countries, especially in the Maghreb region and in the United Republic of Tanzania.

37. In this context a Pan-African Women's Conference on a Culture of Peace and Non-violence in Africa is being organized (Zanzibar, 17–20 May 1999), in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, the Economic Commission for Africa, United Nations agencies and other partners. The Conference is expected to strengthen African women's networks for peace, including new means of communication.

Article 8 International representation and participation

Article 10 Education

38. Priority continues to be given to women's integration at all levels and in all areas of social and political life, including women's participation in major UNESCO world conferences — namely the World Conference on Science in the 21st Century: A New Commitment, which will be held in Budapest, Hungary, from 26 June–1 July 1999. The Conference is a joint collaboration with the International Council for Scientific Unions (ICSU) and involves Governments, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The aim is to draw up a guidance balance sheet of the main

achievements of science, its impact on society and development, the outcome of international scientific cooperation and the challenges for the next century.

39. Since UNESCO places significant emphasis on achieving its goal of equal partnership between men and women in all areas of human development and in the fields of science and technology, the Conference will also address three specific areas of interest as regards women and gender. They include the participation of women in science and technology, the effects and impact of scientific and technological change upon women, and science and technology for women. In order to mobilize governmental authorities and civil society at the national and regional levels, regional forums have been organized to discuss these issues, develop regional recommendations and action plans to present at the World Conference in June 1999. So far, the following regional forums on women and gender in science and technology have been held: Latin and Central America (Bariloche, Argentina, 21–23 October 1998), Europe (Bled, Slovenia, 5–7 November 1998), Asia and the Pacific (Australia — 1–5 December 1998). Future meetings will be held in Africa (Burkina Faso — 25–29 January 1999), the Mediterranean (Turin, Italy, 29–31 January 1999).

40. With regard to women's participation and representation, UNESCO participated in the 99th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Committee of Women Parliamentarians (Windhoek, Namibia, 5–10 April 1998). Among other topics of the Conference, parliamentary diplomacy was considered crucial in helping to avoid the eruption of violent conflicts and promoting values of democracy and peace. Parliamentarians were called to exert pressure and provide advice and to rationalize the process of peace-building. The cooperation between the Union and the Committee is welcome, since both are undertaking substantial and important work in promoting partnerships between women and men parliamentarians and balancing gender representation in political life.

41. In Pakistan, there are no restrictions on women regarding representation and participation at the international level or on working with international organizations. The civil service is open to women, and there is sizeable representation of women in the Government, both at the national level and in the foreign service. Although there are no restrictions, constraints exist in the system. In this regard, UNESCO Islamabad is working to ensure that women are as well represented as men at international meetings. These efforts need to be reinforced, since there remains a large gap between men and women in absolute numbers as well as percentages.

42. UNESCO's office in Chile assisted in the organization of an expert group meeting on national machineries for gender equality (Santiago, Chile, from 31 August to 4 September 1998). The objective of the meeting was to develop a regional strategy which could become a useful tool for policy makers in helping to translate the Beijing Platform for Action into reality and to facilitate the discussion of the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-third session in March 1999 on the critical area of concern, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.

Article 10 Education

43. The World Conference on Higher Education was organized by UNESCO (Paris, 5–9 October 1998). The Conference adopted a series of proposals to reform higher education and adapt it to the needs of a changing world. The principles are mapped out in the 12-page "World Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century: Vision and Action", adopted along with the seven-page "Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development of Higher Education". Article 4 of the Declaration affirms the urgent priority of providing women with equitable access to higher education and calls for efforts to eliminate all gender stereotyping in higher education, consolidating women's participation and active involvement in decision-making.

44. Focusing on introducing legal literacy for girls and women at all levels of education, the Passport to Equality, a passport-size copy of CEDAW (French, English and Spanish) was reprinted by UNESCO (March 1998) to remind Governments of their commitments made almost 20 years ago to promote women's and girl's human rights. By packaging CEDAW as a "passport", the message UNESCO wishes to convey is that women's and girl's rights are guaranteed by the international community. To know the legal instrument that ensures these rights is to accelerate their application. Due to its successful dissemination and interest received, there are plans to develop a more personalized and popular version of the "passport" and to make it available in Arabic, Portuguese, and other languages. A strategy to promote legal literacy is under way to mobilize this initiative with UNIFEM and other United Nations and donor and funding agencies.

45. The Constitution of Pakistan ensures equal access to education for men and women at all levels. Such barriers as exist are neither constitutional nor legislative but largely socio-cultural and economic. The Government cannot provide enough facilities for the universalization of primary education, as stated in the Constitution. It nevertheless recognizes and accepts its responsibilities and is making an

effort to meet the ultimate target. In this regard, UNESCO Islamabad plays the role of advocate and provides technical and programme support, especially to underprivileged areas. Special efforts are being made to decrease female drop-out rates and promote the level of participation of women. UNESCO contributed $50,000 in 1998 to the Prime Minister's Literacy Commission for advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, and materials development.

46. In an effort to improve the quality of population education in Chile, UNESCO's office in Chile collaborated with UNFPA to organize a special meeting of Latin American parliamentarians, to solicit their support for the introduction of population education in the framework of the education reforms going on in each of their respective countries (Chile, March 1998). Further dialogue is planned, involving all interested parties (education ministers, school directors, teachers, students and parents).

47. As a follow-up to the fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFITEA V) (Hamburg, July 1997), on the theme "Promoting the empowerment of women through adult learning", a series of national meetings was held on preparations for a regional meeting to be held in Montevideo in 1999. Emphasis is being given to discussing the possibilities of citizens' control over public policies on adult education. At present, countries such as Chile, Brazil, Bolivia, Uruguay and Mexico are producing documents to sensitize public opinion on these issues. They will be circulated in public secondary schools, on radio programmes, and through other channels of communication in the region.

48. Under UNESCO's transdisciplinary project Educating for a Sustainable Future (EPD), priority is given to education for all, with emphasis on girls and women, the disadvantaged, and marginalized youth. UNESCO New Delhi has been working with EPD to provide training for women in Panchayats — Organization EKTA, Tamil Nadu; to provide support at the state level in working out strategies to combat violence against women; and to look at the training needs of elected women members of the Panchayat Raj institutions. The study compiled training materials for elected women initiated by the Government, non-governmental organizations and activists.

49. UNESCO's office in New Delhi is collaborating with the National Council for Educational Research and Training on a project on the evaluation of incentive schemes designed to improve girls' and womens' basic education. The project seeks to conduct a national evaluation and review of incentive schemes for girls at the primary level of education — for example: midday meals, free uniforms, free textbooks, attendance scholarships.

50. Similar efforts are also being made by UNESCO's office in Rabat. A contract has recently been granted to the Algerian National Commission to UNESCO and l'Association Algérian d'alphabétisation (IQRAA) to organize a training programme to train 80 people in the western region of Algeria. IQRAA encourages the education of girls and women through its public opinion campaigns and in the establishment of over 150 education centres in Algeria.

51. A project is also ongoing for 1998–1999 in Rabat, with the Ribat Al Fath Association for the training of teachers, trainers, and for the production of two literacy manuals, a cartoon, a monthly information magazine, cultural activities, the development of informatics material, and the launching of new training courses. Campaigns are also being organized on population education and the environment.

Statistics

52. On the basis of the positive experience of two previous workshops for training statisticians in gathering and processing sex-disaggregated data, held in Africa in 1996 and 1997, another such workshop was held this year, also for the Arab States, in collaboration with the Jordanian National Commission on Gender-Sensitive Education Indicators (Amman, 21–25 November 1998). Parallel efforts are being made fully to include the gender approach in the current setting up of the new International Institute for Statistics, both at the policy and the practical levels.

53. A handbook, *Gender Sensitive Statistics and Indicators in Education* (French and English), was produced at the end of 1997 by UNESCO's Division of Statistics, as training material for workshops on educational statistics and indicators. The publication is now also available in Arabic.

54. UNESCO's office in New Delhi organized a workshop in collaboration with UNDP and the Department of Women and Children, to develop GDI and GEM at the state and district levels on gender issues and indicators for states and districts (New Delhi, 6–7 November 1998). Pilot programmes were formulated to measure gender and empowerment in selected districts and to identify a methodology suited to all districts, including those with limited statistical and analytical capacities. The goal is universal applicability of data collection methods throughout the country.

55. In order to address the need for better quantitative and qualitative information regarding girls and women, science

and technology in education, career choice and professional development, UNESCO's Science Programme and Gender Unit are developing a tool kit on gender indicators for engineering, science and technology. It is hoped that there will be sufficient budgetary resources to support a pilot survey and gender analysis of sex-disaggregated data in engineering, science and technology, to be conducted by UNESCO.

Information-sharing

56. The Know-How Conference on the World of Women's Information, organized by the International Information Centre and Archives for the Women's Movement (IIAV), was the third conference of its kind since 1990. It was attended by 300 international participants representing community-based information centres, public institutions (national archives and libraries), university research centres, regional and global non-governmental organizations specialized in information-sharing, women's press groups and individual activists.

57. In this regard, UNESCO's Communication Programme and Gender Unit were involved in the preparation of the Conference from February 1998, providing recommendations for keynote speakers and providing financial assistance and guidance for the creation of the database of women's information services in the world (Mapping the World Project) which was launched during the Conference. Also launched at that time was the *European Women's Thesaurus*, a list of controlled terms for indexing information on the position of women and women's studies. Both of these tools were very well received by the participants and given full support.

Science education

58. The Beijing Platform for Action emphasizes science and technology in education as a strategic objective. With a majority of the African population being composed of women, Africa's only hope for industrialization lies in women's empowerment in both science and technology. As the focal point for science and technology in Africa, UNESCO's office in Nairobi has made efforts to implement the Beijing Platform by enhancing the participation of girls and women in science and technology through grants and other activities within the different programmes that it supports.

59. A project on coasts and small islands is just commencing in Eastern and Southern Africa. Future work will be based on the recommendations of the Pan African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management (PACSICOM) (Maputo, Mozambique, 18–24 July 1998), in particular, on those from the PACSICOM technical workshop Sustainable Coastal Development: The Role of Communication and Education. Eight out of 18 presentations were made by women, and one paper, "Sustainable coastal development: the role of communication and education: a gender perspective", focused on gender issues. Follow-up on improving communication between stakeholders concerned with the sustainable use of the coastal approach is essential.

60. In the basic sciences, UNESCO Nairobi conducted the following activities directly benefiting women. Sponsorship of two women participants to the fourth regional seminar on the use of microcomputers in physics research and education (21–25 September 1998, University of Nairobi, Kenya); sponsorship of Nouzha El Yacoubi to attend and organize the ninth Olympiades pan africaines de mathématiques (OPAM), (27–31 July 1998, Rabat, Morocco); sponsorship of one woman participant to the ninth Natural Products Summer School (19–29 August 1998, University of Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania); sponsorship of three women participants to the UNESCO/ICRO training course on cell biology of early development of selected freshwater fish and marine invertebrates (22 November–5 December 1998, Mombasa, Kenya); sponsorship of two women participants to a university course on environmental impact assessment (6–17 April 1998, Université d'Abobo Adjamé, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire), sponsorship of five women participants to a regional training course on molecular biology techniques and biotechnology (7–18 September 1998, University of Nairobi, Kenya); five from Kenya and two from Uganda, and a UNESCO/BAC fellowship to Ms. Ndiaye M. C. Dasylva, for a research visit to Nairobi, Kenya.

61. Within the Special Project on Women in Science and Technology, a grant was given to a woman scientist from Kenya to attend and present papers at the RCPMI-Obihiro/OIE-Paris International Symposium (19–22 August 1998, Obihiro, Japan) and the ninth International Congress of Parasitology (24–28 August 1998, Chibe, Japan).

62. A major objective of the project on the promotion of ethno-botany and the sustainable use of plant resources in Africa is to strengthen the role of women in decision-making positions and to support activities of particular relevance to women. This is reflected in a preference for female candidates in training activities and in provision of support to activities that have a clear gender component. Of the total of 12 study and travel grants issued under this project since April 1998, seven women (compared to five men) have received awards. The five field-based studies (including one

conducted by a male researcher) all have a clear gender-component, particularly focusing on the role of women as resource users and conservators and recording and, wherever possible, addressing the priority needs of women. Of six travel grants, three were issued to women. Considering the fact that about 80 per cent of the requests come from men, this is an indicator of "positive discrimination" to increase the number of female participants in meetings and to promote their individual careers.

63. In general, field coordinators and project executants are well aware of the necessity to identify project components of particular relevance to women and make efforts to address them. This does, however, not take the form of forcing a gender perspective onto every activity. Rather, the aim of programme activities is to integrate that perspective and to raise awareness of social and habitual constraints that mar the perception of women as partners in research and management and as distinct resource users. In reviewing research proposals, attention is given to the use of non-sexist language, according to the guidelines of UNESCO.

Children in distress

64. In Morocco, a project has recently been launched by UNESCO Rabat and the Ministry of Youth and Sport to build two classrooms, fitted with hair salon equipment at the Observation and Re-education Centre for Girls in Abdeslam Bennani, Casablanca. The Centre takes care of young girls who have committed petty theft, prostitution and other acts of delinquency, in efforts to provide them with basic educational tools and a trade for the future.

65. Another project has recently been launched by UNESCO Rabat with BAYTI, an organization that works with children in difficult situations; street children, and those abandoned, sexually or physically exploited and violated, or unlawfully employed. The project, Street Girls, is being developed for girls in Casablanca, Meknes and Essaouira. It includes workshops on diverse subjects: health, hygiene, art, theatre, sport etc. Efforts are being made to purchase pedagogic training materials to reinforce and help young ex-prostitutes reintegrate into society.

Article 10 Education

Article 11 Work

66. One of UNESCO's major thrusts for contributing to development is directed towards renewing and diversifying technical and vocational education, so as to prepare young women and men as adults for the world of work and for responsible civic life. It also includes the development of alternative educational opportunities so as to provide every individual with access, at any time, to education and training compatible with his or her needs. With these objectives in mind, the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education: Lifelong Learning and Training – a Bridge to the Future is being organized by UNESCO and the Government of the Republic of Korea (Seoul, 26–30 April 1999). Providing lifelong learning and training for the world of work in the twenty-first century is the main thrust of the Congress.

Article 12

67. Women and young girls are more vulnerable than men and boys to HIV infection biologically, socially and economically. The AIDS pandemic has affected the education of girls more than boys by requiring them to stay home from school to take care of ill parents or orphaned relatives and to carry out household tasks. Education with the objective of preventing infection is one of the most successful means of effectively containing the pandemic. UNESCO's Section for Preventive Education perceives as its role the empowerment of girls and women to lead healthy, economically productive lives through school-based education for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and drug abuse.

68. UNESCO's main approach in the field of education for the prevention of AIDS and drug abuse is to strengthen the capacities of ministries of education to formulate national plans of action for the integration of preventive education in the school curriculum. To achieve this goal, a series of regional seminars intended for decision makers from the education sector were organized. Colombia, Kyrgyzstan and Thailand participated in the seminars.

69. Teachers, particularly through their organizations, are crucial partners in UNESCO's action in the field of preventive education. Colombia participated in the WHO/UNESCO International Conference on School Health Education and HIV/AIDS Prevention, for representatives of teachers' organizations (Harare, July 1995).

70. China and Thailand participated in the regional Workshop on the Prevention of HIV/AIDS and Drug Abuse through Quality Improvement of Curriculum and Teacher/Learning Materials in Asia and the Pacific, organized by UNESCO and UNDCP (Beijing, 25–29 August 1997).

71. A regional workshop on preventive education against HIV/AIDS for grass-roots women's organizations in Africa was held from 7 to 11 September 1998 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The workshop was jointly organized by UNESCO Dakar, Harare and Abidjan and in collaboration with UNAIDS and a UNDP regional HIV development project

in Dakar. Both gender and HIV/AIDS and the advancement of women were discussed. The workshop involved 17 countries — Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Cape Verde, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

72. The workshop targeted women's grass-roots organizations, because women are now at the centre of the HIV/AIDS epidemic; 10 years ago they seemed to be at its periphery. According to WHO, nearly half of all new infections in adults involve women. in 1994, over 1 million women in the world were infected by HIV. Projections estimate that a total number of 14 million women will have been infected by the year 2000: 4 million will have died from AIDS.

73. The goals of the workshop were to reinforce awareness-building by the facilitators on the ground of the importance of HIV/AIDS preventive education in grass-roots women's organizations; to identify examples of best practices with regard to HIV/AIDS preventive education targeting women and men, using appropriate and accessible methods; and to propose the compilation of the strategies recorded and focal points of research on the transfer of educational messages aimed at African women, notably illiterate women.

74. Funding has recently been approved to launch a two-year inter-agency project (UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA and WHO), on the eradication of female genital mutilation (FGM) among the Gusii community in Kenya, for implementation in 1999–2000. Some of the goals to be reached by the project are a reduction in the number of women/girls going through the ritual of FGM by at least 5 per cent; an increased awareness of the negative effects of FGM in the Gusii community and among decision makers at all levels; and a clear picture of prior and ongoing activities in the area of FGM and, through this, an increased collaboration between the various stakeholders.

75. The fifth session of UNESCO's International Bioethics Committee was held in Noordwijk (the Netherlands) from 2 to 4 December 1998. A report, "Women's health, bioethics and human rights", was presented which denounced discrimination against women in health, notably due to unequal access to care. The report focuses on women's health through the various stages of life, health and reproduction; violence against women and girls in Latin America; and the health of elderly women. Five case studies (gender selection of foetuses in India, excision etc.) are included.

76. The report showed that discrimination was particularly serious where reproduction is concerned. When the outcome of a prenatal diagnosis is abortion based solely on sex — usually female — of the foetus, bioethicists must be concerned about the use of modern technology against the female foetus. It was also stated that deaths from pregnancy-related causes take a toll of nearly half a million women each year. Most of these deaths are easily preventable if women are given access to adequate health care. Violence against women, depression, family and work environments and life expectancy are all related to gender discrimination. The report concluded that there is a need for an interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach, and bioethics could play a major role in developing that approach. The report will be published by UNESCO as part of its ethics collection, in English and French.

Article 10 Education

Article 13 Social rights — culture and sport

77. Within the framework of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development, organized by UNESCO (Stockholm, 31 March–2 April 1998), UNESCO made an effort to ensure that gender equality in the arts and culture became a public policy priority along with other important issues. To this end, a paper was devoted to international efforts carried out to cater for women's specific needs in cultural policy. The document, "Women in cultural policies", identified five policy principles supporting gender equality — namely, equality, diversity, recognition, transparency, and productivity. Additionally, parallel to the Conference two *Agora* sessions were organized, dealing with gender issues and the discrimination of women in cultural policy. One was organized by the Society for International Development (SID), on creatively empowering women through the Internet; and the other was organized by the European Research Institute for Comparative Cultural Policies and the Arts (ERICArts), on women and cultural policies.

78. In the area of sport, boys' and men's reactions to the increasing presence of girls and women in the sports world need deeper comprehension and analysis in order to facilitate personal growth of individuals and to control gender stereotyping in sports. In order to better comprehend the different realities and interactions between men and women in the sports world and other issues concerning the position of women in the family, cultural development, human rights, health and technology, UNESCO Windhoek collaborated in the second World Conference on Women in Sport, organized by the Namibian Ministry of Youth and Sports, the

Department of Women's Affairs and the Namibian National Women's Organization (Windhoek, Namibia, 19–22 May 1998).

79. Inspired by the Windhoek meeting and in order to portray sports as a tool for gender equality, UNESCO's Youth Unit, Gender Unit and Education and Sports Division conducted an expert working group meeting on sports and gender equality (24 November 1998). One outcome of the meeting is to be a technical document highlighting the existing research and work in the area, including a presentation of some regional and global realities and a strategy of action, to be presented in 1999, in Uruguay, at the meeting of the Ministers for Youth and Sport (MINEPS III) on physical education and sport as tools for social development.

Article 14 Rural women

80. The highest priority is attached to providing basic education opportunities to the "unreached", with special emphasis on the educational needs of girls and women in rural areas. Functional literacy programmes are linked with developing the skill proficiency of rural women which could become a regular source of income generation for them by equipping them with technical know-how. The Integrated Women's Development Programme, implemented by UNESCO Islamabad (Lahore, Pakistan, August 1998–November 1998) is an example of this type of approach. It provided basic training skills training for women on water and sanitation, water maintenance and management.

81. Particular attention is also given to the active participation of indigenous women, but few projects are addressed to women only. UNESCO is guided by the three following principles: cultural rights for everyone; protection and promotion of different cultural identities; and respect for democratic values and human rights, as set forth by its Constitution. UNESCO is mandated to struggle against all forms of discrimination in its fields of competence. Nowhere is UNESCO's adherence to this commitment more pronounced than in the Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education. Actions taken in this field include studies in various parts of the world with a view to developing and promoting cultural rights.

82. Recent projects in support of indigenous peoples include a workshop on indigenous journalism, organized by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (Madrid, January 1998); participation in the working group meeting on indigenous people (Geneva, July 1997 and 1998); and the signing and reinforcement of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Latin America Association of Indigenous Parliamentarians (August 1997). The women's commission of PLIA is committed to carrying out projects to teach about human rights in indigenous language.

83. Other activities include enhancement of the capabilities of indigenous youth, including young women, in the English-speaking Caribbean subregion, and vocational and technical training for women and young women of the Maya region (UNESCO Guatemala); and a five-day training programme for four indigenous young people, three of the trainees being young women from Canada, Mali and New Zealand.

84. Under the project Réseau euro-maghrébin de formation dans les métiers de la communication (REMFOC), two television journalists from Mauritius participated in communication training sessions (Tunisia, 23 March–4 April 1998, and Brussels, 21 September–3 October 1998). A video of these training sessions is being produced for television, entitled Women of the Maghreb.

85. UNESCO is also conducting a feasibility study to create a radio programme for rural women in Morocco. The radio programme will be diffused in Arabic and Berber dialects on different issues of relevance to women.

86. A seminar was organized in Morocco by UNESCO, UNFPA and the Centre d'études et des recherches démographiques du Ministère de la Prévision économique et du plan on the theme of population education (Rabat, 25–27 March 1998). The objective of the seminar was to exchange qualitative and quantitative approaches to the education of girls from rural areas, population education, family planning, mother and child health, and the family.

United Nations CEDAW/C/1999/I/4

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee

Report by the Secretariat

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* CEDAW/C/1999/I/1.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report[1] addresses a number of issues raised by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in discussions held during its nineteenth session (22 June to 10 July 1998). These include:

(a) The working methods of the pre-session working group;

(b) The Human Rights Committee's guidelines for the exercise of functions by members;[2]

(c) Issues relating to receipt of reports by experts;

(d) Relations with specialized agencies and other United Nations entities.

2. The report also contains:

(a) Relevant issues considered at the tenth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, held at Geneva from 14 to 18 September 1998;

(b) Relevant recommendations of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities;

(c) Possible actions by the Committee to mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1979.

Recommendations for the Committee to consider in regard to ways and means of expediting its work are highlighted throughout the report.

3. A list of States parties whose reports are more than five years overdue is contained in annex I. As requested by the Committee at earlier sessions, the report also contains a list of States parties whose reports are to be considered in order of receipt, taking into account geographical balance (see annex II). The report also contains the procedures and format for the elaboration of concluding comments, adopted by the Committee at its nineteenth session[3] (annex III).

4. Under agenda item 8, the Committee will finalize its report to the Commission on the Status of Women, providing information on the implementation of the Platform for Action based on its review of reports of States parties.[4]

II. Pre-session working group

5. At its nineteenth session, the Committee decided that the pre-session working group for the twenty-first session would meet as a third working group during the twentieth session and would remain, if necessary, for up to three days after the twentieth session, in order to consolidate the lists of issues and questions regarding the periodic reports to be considered at its twenty-first session.[5] The pre-session working group for the twenty-first session should be treated in the same way as all other pre-session working groups, including with respect to input from specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations.

6. The Committee decided to continue its practice of assigning three members, including the designated country rapporteur, who should each be drawn from different regions, to provide questions relating to periodic reports to guide the pre-session working group as it draws up the list of issues and questions relating to periodic reports.

7. In its decision 19/III, the Committee requested the Secretariat to provide draft lists of issues and questions with regard to periodic reports which would be sent in advance of the meeting of the pre-session working group to those Committee members designated as country rapporteurs.

8. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to assess and further refine these working methods and, *inter alia*, identify further assistance that might be provided by the Secretariat, including analysis of reports, taking account of the practice of other treaty bodies in this regard.

III. Guidelines of the Human Rights Committee

9. At its eighteenth session, in its decision 18/III, CEDAW reaffirmed its past practice that "members of the Committee should refrain from participating in any aspect of the consideration of the reports of the States parties of which they were nationals in order to maintain the highest standards of impartiality, both in substance and appearance".[6] At its nineteenth session, CEDAW decided that this decision should be made widely known, in particular to those States parties whose nationals are members of the Committee at the time those States are presenting their reports. It also decided that the Chairperson of the Committee should make this decision, as well as the procedures of the Committee, known to new members.

10. At its nineteenth session, the Committee also decided that the guidelines of the Human Rights Committee for the exercise of functions by members should be discussed by Working Group I at the twentieth session of the Committee, if the programme of work of the Committee permits.

11. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to propose that the guidelines of the Human Rights Committee, with any comments by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, be circulated by the Chairperson of the Committee to new members after each election.

IV. Receipt of reports by experts

12. At its nineteenth session, the Committee decided that the Secretariat should make its best efforts to ensure early receipt of reports, including through the use of electronic means of communication.

13. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to provide the Secretariat with guidance in respect of this recommendation, taking into account the availability of reports in United Nations languages and the timing of the responses of States parties with respect to invitations to present their reports.

V. Relations with specialized agencies and other United Nations entities

14. At its eighteenth session, in January 1998, the Committee decided that representatives of the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations should be invited to provide country-specific information to the pre-session working group on those States parties whose reports were before the group. It also decided that representatives of the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations should be invited to address the Committee as a whole in a closed meeting on those States parties whose initial reports were before the Committee.[7]

15. At its sixteenth session, the Committee expressed the wish that the input of specialized agencies into its work be more structured and country-specific.[8]

16. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider the elaboration of guidelines for the use of specialized agencies and other entities in this regard.

VI. Tenth meeting of persons chairing human rights treaty bodies

17. The tenth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies was convened at Geneva from 14 to 18 September 1998, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/118 of 12 December 1997. The report of the meeting,[9] which has been made available to Committee members, raises a number of issues pertinent to the work of the Committee.

18. The chairpersons expressed appreciation for the increasing cooperation between the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and recommended that the expertise of the treaty bodies in general should be increasingly drawn upon by the Subcommission in its preparation of future studies.

19. The chairpersons re-emphasized the importance of the work of the special rapporteurs and representatives, experts and chairpersons of working groups and underlined the utility of and the need for easy access to the reports of other existing United Nations mechanisms so as to improve the work of the human rights treaty bodies. They recommended that ways to improve the communication and information flow between the various United Nations mechanisms should be explored and they endorsed the conclusion reached at the fifth meeting of special rapporteurs that the current practice of rapporteurs occasionally participating in meetings of treaty bodies should be institutionalized. The chairpersons also agreed to hold their eleventh meeting to coincide with the meeting of special rapporteurs and representatives, experts and chairpersons of working groups.

20. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider the implications of these recommendations for its work.

21. The chairpersons reiterated their view that universal ratification of the six principal human rights treaties constituted an essential dimension of a global order committed to full respect for human rights (A/53/125, paras. 13–16). They recommended that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights develop a concerted and comprehensive action programme to promote universal ratification in cooperation with specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, and report to the chairpersons at their eleventh meeting on the action taken in this regard.

22. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider this recommendation, particularly in the context of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, and make concrete suggestions for action with respect to the achievement of universal ratification.

23. The chairpersons reiterated their view that it was desirable to strive for focused periodic reports which would examine a limited range of issues which might be identified

by the relevant treaty body in advance of the preparation of the report. The chairpersons noted that such an approach would greatly reduce the need for very lengthy reports, minimize duplication of reports, help to eliminate long delays between the submission and the examination of reports, allow problem areas to be dealt with in depth and facilitate the follow-up of concluding observations, both for the State party and for the committee concerned.

24. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider the issue of focused reports in relation to its own work and in preparation of the eleventh meeting of the persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies.

25. The chairpersons continued their discussion of the preliminary conclusions adopted by the International Law Commission at its forty-seventh session relating to reservations to normative multilateral treaties and noted the third report on reservations to treaties submitted by Mr. Alain Pellet, Special Rapporteur, to the Commission at its fiftieth session, in 1998. The chairpersons took note of the report of the Secretary-General reflecting the views of the six human rights treaty bodies on the preliminary conclusions of the International Law Commission,[10] which has been made available to Committee members. They agreed to pursue the consideration of the preliminary conclusions in their respective committees with a view to formulating their comments and forwarding them to the International Law Commission.

26. Recommendation: in addition to its statement on reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[11] which has been submitted to Mr. Pellet, the Committee may wish to formulate comments on the preliminary conclusions.

27. The chairpersons considered a report reviewing the integration of a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations human rights treaty bodies.[12] The report, which has been made available to Committee members, was strongly endorsed by the chairpersons and called upon each of the committees to take full account of the recommendations contained in the report within the framework of their respective mandates.

28. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider future action to assist in integration of a gender perspective in other treaty bodies based on those identified in the report.

VII. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

29. At its fiftieth session, in August 1998, the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted resolution 1998/15 on women and the right to land, property and adequate housing. In the resolution, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was invited to pay special attention to women's rights to land, property and an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing, when examining the reports of States parties and to explore the possibility of adopting a general recommendation on this theme as it relates, *inter alia*, to the provisions of article 14 of the Convention with a view to clarifying the obligations of States parties to the Convention in this respect.

30. In resolution 1998/19 on the report of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, the Subcommission invited the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to elaborate general recommendations to clarify reporting procedures with regard to the trafficking in persons and related practices of sexual exploitation. It also recommended that, in examining the periodic reports of States parties, the Committee should pay particular attention to the implementation of article 6 and include an item in its guidelines relating to contemporary forms of slavery.

31. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider these suggestions, including in the context of its long-term programme relating to general recommendations.

32. Also during its fiftieth session, the Subcommission requested one of its members, Ms. Françoise Jane Hampson, to prepare a working paper on the question of reservations to human rights treaties, to be submitted at its fifty-first session.

33. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to provide Ms. Hampson with inputs to assist in the preparation of this working paper.

VIII. Twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

34. The Convention was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979. Accordingly, 1999 will mark the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention. The Committee may wish to consider ways and means of marking this important anniversary, for example, initiatives to encourage universal ratification or modification or removal of reservations. A panel discussion with high-level participants on the importance and the impact of the Convention at the national level, which could take place during the twenty-first session of the Committee in June/July, might also be appropriate.

35. The year 1999 will also mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.[13] The Committee may wish to consider whether it might be appropriate to recall this anniversary in the commemoration of that of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

36. Recommendation: the Committee may wish to consider and make proposals with respect to the twentieth anniversary of the Convention to be commemorated in 1999.

IX. Reports to be considered at the twenty-first, twenty-second and twenty-third sessions

37. At its seventeenth session, the Committee adopted decision 17/II, in which it decided that "the maximum number of reports to be considered at each session will normally be eight, drawn from a proposed list of up to ten countries".[14] At its nineteenth session, the Committee proposed a list for the twenty-first and twenty-second sessions. The Committee may wish to review its proposed list for the twenty-second session and, in drawing up the list for the twenty-third and twenty-fourth sessions, it may wish to take account of annex II, which indicates the reports of States parties that are available, particularly those available in the official languages of the United Nations.

Notes

[1] At its twelfth session, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women decided that the Secretariat should prepare a report on ways and means of improving the work of the Committee every year (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/48/38), para. 632). Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 51/68 of 12 December 1996, in which the Assembly authorized the Committee to hold two sessions annually, the Secretariat has provided the Committee with a report on ways and means for each session.

[2] CCPR/C/63/CRP.2/Add.2.

[3] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), para. 397.

[4] General Assembly resolution 52/231.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), part two, chap. I, sect. B, decision 19/I.

[6] Ibid., part I, para. 441.

[7] Ibid., chap. I, sect. A, decisions 18/I and 18/II.

[8] Ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/52/38/Rev.1), para. 365.

[9] A/53/432, annex.

[10] E/CN.4/Sub.2/1998/25.

[11] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), part two, chap. I., sect. A.

[12] HRI/MC/1998/6.

[13] General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989.

[14] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/52/38/Rev.1), part two, chap. I, sect. B.

Annex I

States parties whose reports are more than five years overdue

State party	*Date due*

A. Initial reports

Angola	17 October 1987
Benin	11 April 1993
Bhutan	30 September 1982
Brazil	2 March 1985
Burundi	7 February 1993
Cape Verde	3 September 1982
Central African Republic	21 July 1992
Congo	25 August 1983
Costa Rica	4 May 1987
Dominica	3 September 1982
Estonia	20 November 1992
Grenada	29 September 1991
Guinea	8 September 1983
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1986
Haiti	3 September 1982
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1982
Latvia	14 May 1993
Liberia	16 August 1985
Malta	7 April 1992
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1986
Saint Lucia	7 November 1983
Samoa	25 October 1993
Seychelles	4 June 1993
Sierra Leone	11 December 1984
Togo	26 October 1984
Trinidad and Tobago	11 February 1991

B. Second periodic reports

Angola	17 October 1991
Bhutan	30 September 1986

State party	*Date due*
Brazil	2 March 1989
Cape Verde	3 September 1986
Costa Rica	4 May 1991
Dominica	3 September 1986
Gabon	20 February 1988
Guinea	8 September 1987
Guinea-Bissau	22 September 1990
Guyana	3 September 1986
Haiti	3 September 1986
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1986
Liberia	16 August 1989
Malawi	11 April 1992
Mali	10 October 1990
Saint Kitts and Nevis	25 May 1990
Saint Lucia	7 November 1987
Sierra Leone	11 December 1993
Togo	26 October 1988
Viet Nam	19 March 1987

C. Third periodic reports

Bhutan	30 September 1990
Brazil	2 March 1993
Cape Verde	3 September 1990
Congo	25 August 1991
Dominica	3 September 1990
El Salvador	18 September 1990
France	13 January 1993
Gabon	20 February 1992
Guatemala	11 September 1991
Guinea	8 September 1991
Guyana	3 September 1990
Haiti	3 September 1990
Kenya	8 April 1993
Lao People's Democratic Republic	13 September 1990
Liberia	16 August 1993

State party	*Date due*
Mauritius	8 August 1993
Mongolia	3 September 1990
Saint Lucia	7 November 1991
Sri Lanka	7 November 1990
Togo	26 October 1992
Viet Nam	19 March 1991

Annex II

States parties whose reports have been submitted but have not yet been considered by the Committee

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
A. Initial reports			
Belize[a, c]	15 September 1991	19 September 1996	CEDAW/C/BLZ/1–2
Democratic Republic of the Congo[a, b, c]	16 November 1987	1 March 1994	CEDAW/C/ZAR/1
Georgia[c]	25 November 1985	9 March 1998	CEDAW/C/GEO/1
Jordan	31 July 1993	27 October 1997	CEDAW/C/JOR/1
Nepal	22 May 1992	16 November 1998	CEDAW/C/NPL/1
Republic of Moldova	3 July 1995	26 October 1998	CEDAW/C/MDA/1
B. Second periodic reports			
Belize[a, c]	15 June 1995	19 June 1996	CEDAW/C/BLZ/1–2
Burkina Faso[a]	13 November 1992	11 December 1997	CEDAW/C/BFA/2–3
Chile[a, c]	6 January 1995	9 March 1995	CEDAW/C/CHI/2
Democratic Republic of the Congo[a, b, c]	16 November 1991	24 October 1996	CEDAW/C/ZAR/2
Equatorial Guinea[a]	22 November 1989	6 January 1994	CEDAW/C/GNQ/2–3
Germany	9 August 1990	8 October 1996	CEDAW/C/DEU/2–3
Iraq	12 September 1991	13 October 1998	CEDAW/C/IRQ/2–3
Ireland[c]	22 January 1991	6 February 1997	CEDAW/C/IRL/2–3
Jamaica	18 November 1989	17 February 1998	CEDAW/C/JAM/2–4
Uruguay	8 November 1986	3 February 1998	CEDAW/C/URY/2–3
C. Third periodic reports			
Austria	30 April 1991	25 April 1997	CEDAW/C/AUT/3–4
Belarus	3 September 1990	1 July 1993	CEDAW/C/BLR/3
Belgium	9 September 1994	29 September 1998	CEDAW/C/BEL/3–4
Democratic Republic of the Congo[a, b, c]	16 November 1995	2 July 1998	CEDAW/C/XXX/3
Egypt[c]	18 October 1990	30 January 1996	CEDAW/C/EGY/3
Equatorial Guinea[a]	22 November 1993	6 January 1994	CEDAW/C/GNQ/2–3
Finland	4 October 1995	28 January 1997	CEDAW/C/FIN/3
Germany	9 August 1994	8 October 1996	CEDAW/C/DEU/2–3
Iceland	3 July 1994	15 July 1998	CEDAW/C/ICE/3–4
Iraq	12 September 1995	13 October 1998	CEDAW/C/IRQ/2–3
Ireland[c]	22 January 1995	7 August 1997	CEDAW/C/IRL/2–3
Jamaica	18 November 1993	17 February 1998	CEDAW/C/JAM/2–4
Luxembourg	4 March 1998	12 March 1998	CEDAW/C/LUX/3
Spain[a, c]	4 February 1993	20 May 1996	CEDAW/C/ESP/3
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland[a, c]	7 May 1995	16 August 1995 8 August 1997	CEDAW/C/UK/3 CEDAW/C/UK/3/Add.1
Uruguay	8 November 1990	3 February 1998	CEDAW/C/URY/2–3

State party	*Date due*	*Date received*	*Document symbol*
Yugoslavia	28 March 1991	14 October 1998	CEDAW/C/YUG/3
D. Fourth periodic reports			
Austria	30 April 1995	25 April 1997	CEDAW/C/AUT/3–4
Belgium	9 September 1998	29 September 1998	CEDAW/C/BEL/3–4
Denmark	21 May 1996	9 January 1997	CEDAW/C/DEN/4
Germany	9 September 1998	27 October 1998	CEDAW/C/DEU/4
Iceland	3 July 1998	15 July 1998	CEDAW/C/ICE/3–4
Jamaica	18 November 1997	17 February 1998	CEDAW/C/JAM/2–4
Japan	25 July 1998	24 July 1998	CEDAW/C/JPN/4
Nicaragua	26 November 1994	16 June 1994	CEDAW/C/NIC/4
Spain[a]	4 February 1997	20 October 1998	CEDAW/C/ESP/4
Sweden	3 September 1994	21 May 1996	CEDAW/C/SWE/4

[a] Report has been translated, reproduced and made available in all official languages.

[b] By a communication dated 20 May 1997, the Secretariat was informed by the Member State formerly known as Zaire that the name of the State had been changed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

[c] Report to be considered by the Committee at its twenty-first session, to be held in New York in June 1999.

Annex III

Procedures and format for the elaboration of concluding comments

1. The Committee designates from among its members a country rapporteur for the report of each State party.

2. Assisted by the Secretariat, the country rapporteur seeks additional information on the situation of women in the State party under review. The findings of the country rapporteur are presented as a briefing on the report at a closed meeting before the State party's presentation. In the case of periodic reports, the rapporteur's report is sent in advance to the pre-session working group.

3. The Committee holds a closed meeting after the constructive dialogue to consider the main issues and trends to be reflected in the concluding comments relating to the report of the State party. Concluding comments drafted thereafter reflect only the views expressed at the meetings during which the report is presented and not the views of the individual country rapporteurs.

4. The expert nominated as the country rapporteur drafts concluding comments in close collaboration with the general rapporteur of the Committee and with the support of the Secretariat.

5. Concluding comments are preceded by a summary of the State party's presentation, which is prepared by the Secretariat.

6. Concluding comments usually follow a standard format under four headings: introduction; positive aspects; factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Convention; principal areas of concern and recommendations.

7. The introduction contains comments on whether the report has followed the Committee's guidelines for the preparation of the initial and periodic reports; whether it was sufficient or insufficient; whether it incorporates or refers to statistical information disaggregated by sex. It also contains the Committee's general recommendations. Issues addressed in this section are: whether there are any reservations to the Convention; whether reservations have been withdrawn; whether the State party has objected to the reservations of other States parties; and whether the State party has mentioned the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the nature and relevance of the oral presentation. An objective indication of the strengths of the report and the strength of the delegation is generally included.

8. The "positive aspects" section is organized in the order of the articles of the Convention.

9. The "factors and difficulties" section describes major overarching reasons why the Convention has not been implemented fully by the State party. Any reservations to the Convention are also addressed in this section, as are other legal impediments to the implementation of the Convention.

10. The "principal areas of concern and recommendations" section organizes the issues of particular importance to the country under review in the order of their importance and provides concrete proposals from the Committee on the problems identified in the rest of the comments.

11. The concluding comments include a reference to any commitments that the State party made at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

12. Where appropriate, the concluding comments include specific suggestions to the State parties with regard to possible technical assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other parts of the United Nations system. Recommendations relating to technical assistance could, for example, be directed to reservations, review of legislation and law reform.

13. Concluding comments close with a recommendation relating to dissemination, requesting the wide dissemination of the concluding comments in the State party concerned, in order to make the people in the State party, and particularly its government administrators and politicians, aware of the steps that have been taken to ensure de facto equality for women and the further steps required in that regard. It also requests the State party to continue to disseminate widely, and in particular to women's and human rights organizations, the Convention, the Committee's general recommendations and the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.

14. Each concluding comment is internally balanced, and the Committee strives to achieve consistence and balance, particularly in terms of praise and expressions of concern, among the concluding comments elaborated at each session. Accordingly, the Committee considers concluding comments comparatively in an effort to ensure that they are even.[a]

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[a] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session , Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), part two, para. 397.

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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Progress in implementation of the Platform for Action based on the review of States parties' reports by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

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I. Introduction

1. The Beijing Platform for Action,[1] adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995, is an agenda for women's empowerment. It aims to build on and accelerate the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women[2] and remove all the obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life. The Platform for Action reaffirms the fundamental principles established in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III) that the human rights of women and the girl child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The Platform seeks to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle.

2. The Platform is directly linked to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.[3] The Convention, adopted 20 years ago on 18 December 1979, is acceded or succeeded to or ratified by 163 States parties and signed by others. The Convention sets legally binding obligations for States parties, and sets the international standard for what is meant by equality between women and men.[4]

3. The Commission on the Status of Women has the primary mandate for monitoring the implementation of the Platform for Action. However, the Platform makes clear that the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women also has an important role in this regard. Accordingly, the Platform specifically invites States parties to the Convention to include information on measures taken to implement the Platform when reporting under article 18 of the Convention in order to facilitate the Committee's effective monitoring of women's ability to enjoy the rights guaranteed by the Convention. The Committee is also tasked with taking the Platform into account when considering these reports.[5]

4. In the light of this provision of the Platform for Action, at its fifteenth session the Committee revised its guidelines with regard to the form and content of initial and periodic reports. It invited States parties to take into account the 12 critical areas of concern in chapter III of the Platform for Action in preparing their reports or in supplementary oral and/or written materials supplied in connection with reports already submitted. It also noted in its new guidelines that the 12 critical areas of concern are compatible with the articles of the Convention and therefore within the mandate of the Committee.[6]

5. Based on a recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-second session, the General Assembly invited the Committee to provide information on implementation of the Platform, based on its review of reports of States parties to the Convention.[7]

6. The Committee has held 5 sessions[8] since the adoption of the Platform for Action, and has considered 43 States parties reports: 10 initial reports; 5 combined initial and second reports; 3 combined initial, second and third reports; 1 second report; 9 combined second and third reports; 1 combined second, third and fourth reports; 5 third reports; 7 combined third and fourth reports; and 2 reports on an exceptional basis.[9]

7. The majority of these reports had been prepared and submitted prior to the Fourth World Conference on Women, but measures to implement the Platform have been addressed by States parties in their oral presentations before the Committee and discussed by the Committee in its constructive dialogue with States parties. The Committee has also addressed implementation of the Platform in its concluding comments, in which the Committee appraises the strengths and weaknesses of States parties' implementation of the Convention, making recommendations for future action.[10] Since its eighteenth session, each of the Committee's concluding comments has included a recommendation to disseminate the Platform for Action, particularly to women's and human rights organizations.[11]

8. In its consideration of reports since the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Committee has highlighted commitments made by individual States parties at that Conference. For example, it has welcomed one State party's commitments to reduce infant and maternal mortality by 50 per cent, raise compulsory education to eight years, eradicate female illiteracy and withdraw reservations, and commitments made by another State party to education, training, the girl child, women and law, violence against women and children and health.

9. The Committee has commended States parties on efforts to implement the Platform, noting their national action plans, of which the Secretariat has now received 105, as well as specific mechanisms put in place to implement the Platform, such as policies and plans for women's advancement or commissions, intergovernmental machineries or designated offices established to encourage implementation. Strategies to implement the Platform developed in cooperation with non-governmental organizations have been particularly welcomed, as has the inclusion of non-governmental organizations in monitoring implementation. Mention has also been made of innovative

approaches to implementation. For example, the convening of national workshops to address implementation and the development of community programmes on the basis of those workshops, as well as periodic reporting to the public on the Platform have been welcomed, as have the enactment of legislation and earmarking of resources to encourage overall implementation of the Platform.

10. The Committee has noted where States parties have failed to address the Platform for Action in presenting their reports, and has sometimes suggested that plans for implementation are inadequate. It has called on States parties to describe the results of implementation of the Platform in their next periodic report required under the Convention, and has sometimes requested States parties to translate their national action plans into local languages. It has also called for the adoption of an overall plan for implementation of the Platform through specific measures and within a particular time-frame, and requested that the President and ministers be briefed on the implementation of the Platform. In one case, it has suggested that full implementation of a State party's national action plan could be impeded by prevailing religious and cultural norms.

11. The reports considered by the Committee since the adoption of the Platform for Action have presented a richly detailed picture of the situation of women worldwide. The Committee has been provided with opportunities to assess progress in the implementation of the Platform for Action and identify areas requiring further action. In addition, the Committee has made specific suggestions to accelerate implementation.

II. Progress in implementation

12. Consideration of States parties' reports by the Committee has revealed that significant progress has been made in countries to establish or strengthen national machineries tasked with encouraging the advancement of women. Several States parties have created the post of Secretary of State for Women to coordinate official policies. Others have set up ministries for women's affairs, sometimes at Cabinet level; established women's offices within the Office of the Prime Minister; or assigned gender focal points in each ministry. Some States parties have created an independent government advisory service to advise government on the gender dimensions of legislation, policies and programmes or women's councils to promote and coordinate policies of equality. Women's machineries have sometimes introduced innovative mechanisms, such as gender management systems, or have had a catalytic role in ensuring the systematic inclusion of a gender perspective in new policies and programmes, including with regard to law reform.

13. Steps have been taken in some States parties to facilitate gender mainstreaming, including through the compilation of gender-specific statistics to monitor the impact of policies and programmes on girls and women, the creation of equality commissions in ministries or prime ministerial directives to focus on gender issues. One State party has earmarked a given percentage of all government budgets for women's programmes and projects.

14. In the area of human rights, provisions guaranteeing the enjoyment of human rights without discrimination on the basis of sex have been included in several Constitutions, with a number defining such discrimination. In some States parties, international treaties, including the Convention, take precedence over domestic legislation, while in others legislation has been adopted to implement the Convention. Human rights principles have been integrated into legislative reform, and legislation has been adopted that guarantees women's social and political rights. Steps to mainstream the human rights of women have included the establishment of a women's unit in the Ministry of Human Rights in one State party and through an inter-ministerial committee on human rights. Several States parties have established or strengthened the office of the ombudsperson, stressing the human rights of women in this context. Others have appointed deputy ombudspersons to deal specifically with women's human rights or appointed a women's rights commissioner to the human rights commission. Human rights teaching, including with respect to women's rights, has been introduced into the primary and secondary curricula and tertiary curricula has also been introduced in at least one State party.

15. Several States parties have taken steps with respect to the Convention, including ratification without reservations. A number have removed reservations and committed themselves to removing further reservations. Others have indicated that they are working towards removal of reservations, including through drafting legislation. States have lodged objections to reservations by other States parties. Support for strengthening the Convention, including through the adoption of the amendment of article 20(1) and support for the draft optional protocol to the Convention, has also been welcomed by the Committee.

16. Law reform measures, implementing both the Convention and the Platform, have included the revision of personal status codes, establishment of family courts, and the adoption of family code and reform of citizenship laws.

Several States parties have recognized gender-based persecution in refugee law, while provisions in immigration legislation to protect the human rights of immigrant women have also been adopted. One State party has adopted an agrarian reform law giving women the right to inherit land.

17. Several States parties have revised existing labour legislation to incorporate equality provisions, including with regard to equal pay for work of equal value, and others are considering such steps. Expanded and enterprise-subsidized child day-care facilities, the consideration of social security for homemakers and legislation on parental leave have facilitated combining work with family responsibilities. Programmes have been initiated to make female employees aware of their rights in the workplace, and provisions against sexist language in job classifications are being considered. One State party has initiated consultations on ways to measure women's unremunerated work within the national economic system, through a satellite account.

18. Implementation with regard to education has included provisions that make primary and secondary education compulsory for girls and legislation that guarantees the right of pregnant teenagers to complete their education. Affirmative action efforts have also been introduced at the university level. Human rights have been incorporated at various levels of the school curriculum, and women's studies courses have been established at some universities.

19. Efforts to address traditional stereotypes have been initiated in some States parties. These have included the development of curricula, revision of textbooks and teaching methods to eliminate gender-based prejudices from educational programmes, research on the impact of depiction of women in textbooks, and non-traditional career orientation training for girls and women. Educational programmes to raise awareness of equality and to eliminate traditional stereotypes have also been introduced, including with regard to rural women and in relation to health, including sexual health.

20. Traditional stereotypes and discrimination against women have also been addressed in the media, through television, radio and advertising, including programmes dealing with women's issues, women's participation and portrayal of women's image. Some Governments have initiated efforts to make mass media more aware of the need to eliminate sexism, including the projection of women as sex objects.

21. Significant steps have been taken to address the various forms of violence against women by States parties, with a number of States emphasizing the eradication of violence against women, including through its identification as a priority area in a national crime prevention strategy. Several States parties have ratified a regional convention relating to violence against women and legislation with regard to violence against women in the home, and criminalizing marital rape has been introduced. Some States parties have introduced legislation on specific forms of violence against women, such as sexual harassment and female genital mutilation. Innovative laws have been introduced in some States parties, including legislation making the State Treasury responsible for the payment of damages to the victims of violence, provisions shifting the burden of proof from complainants to alleged perpetrators and restraining orders.

22. States parties have established or supported services for victims of violence against women, including hotlines, counselling services, shelters and crisis centres, and emergency medical provision for victims. Measures to encourage reporting of violence, such as through primary health-care providers, have been initiated, as have strategies to ascertain the extent and causes of violence in the home. Many of these have been developed in collaboration with non-governmental organizations. Measures aimed at sensitizing the public, particularly men, to the impact of violent behaviour have been introduced, including public awareness campaigns. Training and sensitization for judiciary and law enforcement officers have been introduced. Special units to handle domestic violence complaints have been established and protocols for police officers dealing with sexual assault developed. Victim-friendly courts have also been established in some States parties.

23. Steps have been taken to address acts of violence against women allegedly perpetrated by soldiers during peacekeeping missions in one State party, while another has promoted the role of women as peacekeepers.

24. Several States parties have introduced measures in relation to trafficking and the exploitation of prostitution, including extraterritorial legislation to facilitate prosecution of trafficking and laws to protect prostitutes.

25. In order to eliminate discrimination against women in decision-making States parties have, *inter alia*, appointed focal points in national, regional and local political decision-making bodies, appointed women to high-level posts, including in the judiciary, and nominated women as candidates for governmental advisory bodies. States parties have sought to raise public awareness and introduce women's representation, and have adopted legislation to increase political participation of women, including by amending electoral laws to ensure a specific proportion of women candidates on electoral lists and the provision of

quotas for parliament and local bodies, as well as the public sector.

26. The participation of an active civil society, supported by and supportive of Government, in promoting gender-equality has been a particular feature in States parties considered by the Committee since the adoption of the Platform for Action. Civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the women's movement, has been critical in awareness-raising, lobbying and service provision.

27. Progress in implementation has also included the creation of women's agricultural cooperatives for rural women and proposals to establish a women's bank to provide credits and loans for small enterprises.

III. Challenges for implementation

28. Consideration of the reports of States parties has enabled the Committee to identify challenges to implementation of the Convention and the Platform. These have included new and emerging issues, such as the adverse economic consequences for women as a result of transition to a market economy, particularly in regard to employment, health and social services, economic recession, the impact of structural adjustment, economic restructuring and privatization, modernization, liberalization and globalization. International and regional economic arrangements have also impacted adversely on women in some States parties. The Committee has noted persisting and deepening poverty among women, particularly heads of households, sometimes as the result of the withdrawal of social assistance. Armed conflict, including terrorism, has continued to result in refugee flow and internal displacement, with women who are displaced frequently experiencing violations of their human rights and the aftermath of displacement raising complex issues in regard to repatriation.

29. Trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution has emerged as a serious challenge to implementation of the Convention and the Platform. Prostitutes continue to suffer as a result of discriminatory application of laws, including forced medical examinations, and the absence of mechanisms of protection and rehabilitation and health services. In addition, the feminization of migration in the absence of methods to respond to abuses experienced by migrant women has rendered migrant women susceptible to human rights violations.

30. The Committee has identified the persistence of stereotypical attitudes towards the gender roles of women and men as a critical challenge to implementation. These attitudes perpetuate traditional practices and customs prejudicial to women, such as violence against women, polygamy, forced marriage, son-preference and "honour" killings. These attitudes also create a pervasive climate of discrimination, incorporating rigid social codes that entrench stereotypical ideas relating to the role of women in the family and their participation in public life, as well as appropriate work for women. They thereby discourage women from entering public life and seeking non-traditional employment.

31. The Committee has noted the strengthening of stereotypical attitudes in several States parties as a result of economic, social and cultural changes. Values overemphasizing the traditional role of women as wives and mothers have reasserted themselves, as have those recognizing men as the breadwinner and head of the family. In some cases, strengthened stereotypes have led to the introduction of legal measures which are overprotective and detrimental to women in a market economy, as well as policies which discourage the participation of fathers in family life and child care.

32. Discriminatory laws, particularly those governing marriage, administration of marital property, divorce and the family, also persist. Several States parties continue to have laws discriminating against women in relation to nationality and penal law, particularly with regard to rape or penalties with regard to honour killings. Others maintain discriminatory laws governing ownership and inheritance of land, access to loans and credits, and health, such as those requiring that a wife obtain her husband's consent for sterilization or abortion. In a number of States parties, women experience discrimination as a result of the coexistence of legal systems, including customary and religious laws, which usually govern private life and sometimes prevail over non-discrimination provisions in the Constitution of the general law.

33. Implementation is hampered by continuing inattention to human rights at the national level. Human rights principles, particularly the Convention, are frequently not incorporated into domestic law. In several States parties, the Constitution does not refer to equality between women and men or does not incorporate a clear definition of discrimination such as that contained in article 1 of the Convention. States parties also continue to maintain reservations to the Convention, thereby hindering its implementation and that of the Platform, with several indicating no intention to withdraw such reservations. There

is also a lack of knowledge of human and legal rights, and limited human rights or legal literacy education.

34. Although significant progress towards the elimination of violence against women has occurred in many States parties, it remains an ongoing challenge to the implementation of the Platform. Several States parties fail to recognize the prevalence of violence against women, particularly that which occurs in the home or is related to tradition or custom, such as female genital mutilation. Legislation and policies in several countries are inadequate. Others have not adopted measures to sensitize the police, judiciary, health professionals and the public about violence against women. Several countries also lack programmes to support victims of violence, while in others victims of sexual assault have been subject to insensitive treatment.

35. Challenges to implementation persist in the context of health, particularly reproductive health, where in some States parties services are at risk as a result of government financial constraints. Preventable diseases and unequal access to health care persists, particularly among rural and other disadvantaged sectors. Maternal and infant mortality is high in several States parties, particularly as a result of unattended births and the absence of safe and legal abortion. Lack of provision of sufficient family planning information, particularly to rural women and adolescents, and the requirement of spousal consent for contraception or sterilization, as well as costs related to contraception, sometimes as a result of privatization of health-care services, have led to high levels of abortion. Criminalization of and restrictive laws governing abortion in some States parties have resulted in a high number of clandestine abortions in unsafe conditions.

36. In several States parties, abortion is resorted to as a method of family planning. In others, coercion has occurred in the context of family planning programmes. Although many States parties lack data and information on the prevalence of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and sex-disaggregated data in this regard, the Committee has noted the high rate of HIV infection among young women and risk of transmission through breastfeeding in several States parties, and has drawn attention to the limited programmes available to address HIV/AIDS among women in many States parties.

37. The Committee has observed that implementation of the Platform for Action with respect to women's economic empowerment has been slow. In some States parties, women's economic activity has declined and they are overrepresented among the unemployed, with a large number of young women looking for first jobs. When employed, women are more likely to be found in part-time employment, temporary and insecure jobs, including in the informal sector. In several States parties, there is a high number of self-employed and women domestic/household workers who have limited labour relations and social security protection.

38. Stereotyping and overprotective labour legislation restrict women's economic opportunities, and women are clustered in occupations substantially less rewarding than occupations where men typically work. Educated women have a low level of occupational achievement, and women are concentrated in the lower-paid service sector with few pursuing technical careers. In several States parties, there are a low number of women in managerial posts, particularly in the private sector, while in others there is low participation by women in academe, particularly research. Wide differentials exist between the wages of women and men for equal work or work of equal value, with women receiving lower wages and having unequal access to work-related benefits, including health benefits, retirement pensions and leave. Inequalities persist in recruitment, and women are more vulnerable to lay-off than men.

39. Legislation governing employment continues to provide inadequate protection for women in a number of States parties, while in others the Government fails to ensure compliance with existing provisions with regard to minimum wage levels, work-related benefits and conditions of work. Absence of paid maternity-leave provision, and absence of, limited or inadequate child-care facilities have an adverse impact on women's capacity to combine work and family responsibilities, and accordingly continue to affect their ability to work, employment status, pay and promotion opportunities. In several States parties, affirmative action and temporary special measures have been misunderstood and envisioned as protective measures. Strategies to enable or encourage women and men to share parental responsibilities have not been introduced. Few States parties have taken steps to assess the economic value of unpaid work.

40. Progress in implementation has also been slow in the area of education. Female illiteracy, particularly among rural and indigenous women, is a significant problem in many States parties. Stereotypical attitudes continue to result in large drop-out rates for girls at primary and secondary levels of education and failure to enrol in tertiary education. These trends are more pronounced in the rural sector and among minority and indigenous populations. In several States parties, pregnancy results in expulsion from school, while in others there is no support to allow pregnant girls to finish their education.

41. Female students are typically clustered in certain disciplines at all levels of education, and there is a reluctance to direct girls to scientific and technical fields of study. In several States parties, schools have been established for female students, which teach "household management" and other typically "female" skills, while certain schools admit only boys because of their physical abilities.

42. The Committee has noted that limited progress has been made in the area of women and decision-making. Representation in political and public life, including the legislature, policy-making and administrative positions in public and private-sector employment, trade unions, the judiciary and the military is low. Women are particularly poorly represented at higher decision-making levels. In some States parties, the representation of women in politics has fallen despite measures in this regard. In others, the removal of quotas by political parties has reduced the number of women in decision-making positions. The Committee is particularly concerned that States parties have made insufficient use of temporary special measures to increase the participation of women in this sector, and has also noted that there has been insufficient networking between women's machinery and women in decision-making.

43. Consideration of States parties reports indicates that rural women continue to experience discrimination in many contexts. They have fewer employment opportunities, and many work in family enterprises, work which is not recognized in the formal economy. Rural women suffer more as a result of prevailing negative attitudes and discriminatory practices, and are vulnerable with regard to basic health protection, including family planning. Rural women are disadvantaged in terms of education and literacy, and have less access to legal literacy programmes. In several States parties, rural women are unable to own land and are unable to participate in land reform programmes. They are also affected disproportionately by the application of discriminatory customary laws, particularly with regard to inheritance and land ownership.

44. Although many States parties have introduced national machineries to promote women's advancement, in several States parties there is no national machinery or an ineffective national machinery, with limited human and financial resources. In several States parties, the national machinery has no effective authority or an advisory or coordinating role only.

45. The Committee has noted that lack of data disaggregated by sex and gender sensitive information are obstacles to the implementation of both the Convention and the Platform. Gender-sensitive data is unavailable in particular sectors, including employment and health, violence against women, HIV/AIDS, political participation and prostitution.

IV. Towards accelerated implementation

46. Review of reports since the Fourth World Conference on Women has allowed the Committee to make specific recommendations towards accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action.

47. It has particularly stressed the value of **temporary special measures** aimed at accelerating de facto equality between women and men envisaged under article 4.1 of the Convention. The introduction of such measures has been recommended in the context of political and public life, with the Committee frequently calling on States parties to implement or maintain temporary special measures, with numerical goals and quantitative targets and timetables to accelerate de facto equality with regard to political participation and decision-making positions. The Committee has also suggested the introduction of **measures of affirmative action,** such as quotas with respect to all governmental and governmentally appointed bodies, particularly those dealing with business and economic matters, to ensure equal participation of women.

48. Temporary special measures and programmes have also been recommended in the context of education and training, where the Committee has recommended the use of gender-specific temporary measures with numerical goals and timetables to encourage women to enter diverse disciplines, and to avoid clustering of girls and women in certain traditional disciplines in schools and universities. Where temporary special measures, including quotas, have been introduced, the Committee has emphasized the importance of the evaluation of their impact. In particular, it has suggested that the advantages and disadvantages of different electoral systems for representation of women be examined. Programmes to support temporary special measures and the beneficiaries of these measures have also been recommended. Thus, the Committee has encouraged training programmes for women political leaders to encourage participation of women in decision-making and raise public awareness about women leaders

49. The Committee has identified **law reform** as a critical element of implementation of the Convention of the Platform for Action. It has called for the review of customary and other laws to determine compatibility with international

conventions and national legislation, and for the incorporation of the principles of equality and non-discrimination between women and men, as envisaged in article 1 of the Convention, into national Constitutions and other legislation, including with regard to employment. Specific legislative reforms have also been recommended, including with regard to the advancement of women's reproductive and sexual rights, and family law, including registration of customary marriages, ensuring that women have the right to a free choice of husband and equal guardianship rights. The codification and secularization of customary laws have been suggested, as well as law reforms with respect to land ownership, especially with regard to land ownership and inheritance. The review of civil, nationality and labour codes to bring them into conformity with the Convention has been emphasized. Specific legal provisions allowing the continued practice of honour killings and polygamy have also been targeted as requiring repeal.

50. **Measures to address stereotypical attitudes** are also regarded as crucial to ensure implementation. The Committee has encouraged States parties to take account of evolving interpretation of religious texts to give necessary impetus to the improvement of the status of women and to change attitudes. It has also called for the introduction and strengthening of programmes to combat sexist prejudices and stereotyping. The media and advertising sectors have been targeted in this regard. The Committee has called for an increase in the numbers of women in the media, and has encouraged the media to promote a positive image of women as individuals and independent actors in public media campaigns. The establishment of formal complaints procedures, including sanctions for offending media and advertising agents, have also been suggested. States parties have also been called on to ensure that women's groups participate in the formulation of regulatory codes of practice for the media. The review and modification of school curricula, books and teaching materials has also been a priority concern of the Committee.

51. The Committee has emphasized the role of **human rights education,** and has urged that education in women's rights, including the Convention, should be provided in schools, universities, women's associations and non-governmental organizations. It has stressed the importance of education in women's and children's rights for specific professional groups, including the judiciary, judges, lawyers, journalists, health professionals and teachers. General public awareness campaigns with regard to women's rights, particularly directed at women, have also been recommended.

52. The Committee has underlined the importance of the availability of **data disaggregated by sex** as a basis for policy formulation and the implementation of the Convention and the Platform. It urges States parties to undertake or improve measures to collect statistical information in social and economic fields, particularly with respect to the most vulnerable women, including minority refugee and migrant women, rural women, women with disabilities and ageing women. Statistics disaggregated by sex are especially desirable in the areas of health, education, employment, prostitution and violence. In addition to data disaggregated by sex, the Committee has stressed the importance of gender-sensitive research and analysis, particularly on women in the labour market, and on the effect of transition on women.

53. The **creation of high-level national machinery** with adequate financial and human resources responsible for defining and coordinating a policy for the advancement of women is regarded by the Committee as crucial for implementation. Where States parties have existing national machinery, the Committee has frequently requested that its status be upgraded and its decision-making capacity enhanced.

54. Specific **measures towards the implementation of gender equality in employment** recommended by the Committee include the provision of skills training, retraining and credit facilities to provide employment opportunities or self-employment for workers. It has recommended the exploration of methodologies to close the gap in pay between women and men and to ensure equal pay for work with equal value. Evaluation of the impact of labour relations legislation is identified as a priority in order to assess its impact on workers with family responsibilities, the availability of benefits and maternity leave, and whether particular legislative approaches lead to an increase or decrease in part-time or casual work. Monitoring of compliance with labour laws, particularly in specific settings, such as factories, is emphasized, and strong action is urged against employers who discriminate against women, especially on the basis of pregnancy or maternity. The introduction of paid parental leave, which should be extended to the private as well as the public sectors, is considered by the Committee to be a critical element in the achievement of equality in employment. Similarly, access to affordable, quality child care is essential, especially for pre-school children. In this regard, it advocates that women and men should be educated towards a culture of shared obligations and responsibilities of family work and the rearing of children. Consistent with the Platform for Action, the Committee has recommended the inclusion of the value

of women's unremunerated work, including in rural enterprises, into national accounts, by way of satellite accounts.

55. **Poverty eradication strategies should be gender-sensitive and a gender perspective mainstreamed in poverty eradication efforts and measures.** In this regard, the Committee has highlighted the importance of considering women heads of households with a view to developing policies which will allow their socio-economic situation to be strengthened and will prevent poverty. In this context, the Committee has recommended the introduction of training programmes aimed at increasing opportunities for women to make use of micro-credit, as well as programmes to train women with regard to access to credit and loans. The specific vulnerabilities of rural women are recognized by the Committee in this context, as well as the need to establish special measures to increase their access to credit, including through special banks and self-sufficiency programmes.

56. **The introduction or enhancement of multifaceted and coordinated measures to address the various forms of violence against women** has been repeatedly stressed by the Committee. It has called for specific legislation measures and law reform, and the introduction or strengthening of support services for victims of violence. Measures to ensure that the dynamics of violence against women are understood by professional groups, including law enforcement personnel, judges, sexual and reproductive health and health workers, have been stressed, as have the introduction of adequately resourced support services, such as hotlines, shelters, safe houses and crisis centres, and victim support centres with medical, psychological and emotional support.

57. Awareness-raising campaigns aimed at increasing public sensitivity to the vulnerabilities of women to violence and to encourage public discussion of violence against women have been identified as crucial in a comprehensive strategy to reduce violence. Research and data collection, particularly with regard to vulnerable groups, such as minority, immigrant and rural women, have been stressed, as well as the study of the impact of specific legislation on reducing violence. Specific legislative changes, including the criminalization of marital rape, ensuring that secular courts have sole jurisdiction in cases of sexual violence, giving victims privacy and protection during court proceedings, facilitation of prosecution of domestic violence and increasing penalties for sexual crimes, are also recommended. Specific suggestions concerning the elimination of violence against women in armed conflict have included the establishment of a witness protection unit in courts and tribunals, ensuring that women serve as judges in such courts and the training of human rights field operations with regard to gender issues. As a long-term strategy to eliminate violent conduct, the Committee has urged the incorporation of non-violent forms of conflict resolution in education and the media.

58. In the context of **trafficking in women and the exploitation of prostitution, the Committee has urged review and amendment of legislation which discourages prostitution and trafficking and the introduction of legislative measures to ensure prosecution of criminal offenders, as well as mechanisms to rehabilitate victims through education, training and support.** In particular, the strengthening of agencies that provide information and support services to women before they depart for overseas work, as well as in receiving countries, has been stressed, as have been public information campaigns for vulnerable women to alert them to dangers when seeking work abroad. Measures to sensitize police, border officials and non-governmental organizations and to undertake research into trafficking and the use of the Internet in exploitation have been encouraged. The Committee has urged the formulation of bilateral and multilateral agreements to reduce and eradicate traffic in women and protect women migrant workers, including domestic workers, from sexual exploitation.

59. In order to achieve equality in the field of **health,** the Committee has urged the close monitoring of the impact of the privatization of social services on health care for women. It has recommended the review of laws containing punitive measures relating to abortion and other laws concerning sexual and reproductive health. It has urged the introduction of gender-sensitive reproductive and sexual health education, information and counselling, and the integration of reproductive and sexual health services, including family planning, into primary health care. Training for health personnel with regard to women's rights, including the right to freely and without coercion choose methods of contraception, is also advocated. Measures to ensure accessibility to affordable and safe contraception, particularly for poor and rural women, are also recommended. Intensive programmes to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS, including information, particularly aimed at young girls and boys and women in prostitution, are regarded as critical by the Committee.

Notes

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.

[4] See *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women ...*, chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 25.

[5] Ibid., paras. 322 and 323.

[6] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/51/38), para. 335; for a discussion of the implications of the results of the Fourth World Conference on Women for the Committee, see paras. 367–373.

[7] See Assembly resolution 52/231 of 4 June 1998.

[8] In its resolution 51/68 of 12 December 1996, the General Assembly authorized the Committee to meet annually for two three-week sessions, each preceded by a pre-session working group meeting.

[9] Initial reports: Morocco, Slovenia (sixteenth session), Armenia, Namibia (seventeenth session), Azerbaijan, Croatia, Zimbabwe, Czech Republic (eighteenth session), Slovakia, South Africa (nineteenth session); combined initial and second reports: Cyprus, Iceland, Panama (fifteenth session), Israel, Luxembourg (seventeenth session); combined initial, second and third reports: Ethiopia (fifteenth session), Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (sixteenth session), Antigua and Barbuda (seventeenth session); second report: Belgium (fifteenth session); combined second and third reports, Cuba (fifteenth session), Turkey (sixteenth session), Argentina, Italy (seventeenth session), Bulgaria, Indonesia (eighteenth session), Nigeria, Panama, United Republic of Tanzania (nineteenth session); combined second, third and fourth reports: Dominican Republic (eighteenth session); third periodic reports: Hungary, Ukraine (fifteenth session), Venezuela, Denmark (sixteenth session), Australia (seventeenth session); combined third and fourth reports: Philippines, Canada (sixteenth session), Bangladesh (seventeenth session), Mexico (eighteenth session), New Zealand, Peru, Republic of Korea (nineteenth session); reports submitted on an exceptional basis: Rwanda (fifteenth session), Zaire (sixteenth session).

[10] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/49/38), paras. 812–816; and ibid., *Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 38* (A/53/38/Rev.1), part II, para. 397.

[11] See, for example, the concluding comments with regard to Azerbaijan in ibid., part I, para. 79.